

ONESIMUS

CHARLES
EDWARD
CORWIN



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GREAT DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS

ONESIMUS:

CHRIST'S FREEDMAN

A Tale of the Pauline Epistles

BY

CHARLES EDWARD CORWIN

*"'Tis liberty alone that gives the flow'r,
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,
And we are weeds without it."*—COWPER.



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TO MY WIFE
WHO IS MY
INSPIRATION

PREFACE

To the historical student in general, and to the student of Church history in particular, few epochs of the world's life are of more interest than the first Christian century. The former is surprised to discover a new and regenerating force at work amid the corrupted mass of ancient civilization. The latter is pleased to examine the early growth of that tree whose branches now shade the earth.

The first century of our era was profoundly dark. Politics, philosophy and religion had developed for millenniums and had attained their maturity. Lo, their fruit was tyranny, agnosticism and superstition. The best of men could climb no higher; the worst of men could fall no lower. Stagnation, death, corruption, were the result. And yet that century witnessed the rising of the world's great Light, of whom a famous unbeliever has said, "Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed."

As the Light arose it shone into the darkness; and while the valleys of humanity were still in noisome shade, the mountain tops were kindled with the glory of the dawn. Therefore that time was a period of the greatest contrasts. The Son of God stood face to face with demons. The miracles of divine grace found their caricature in the tricks of

the magician. Characters such as Paul and Nero grew side by side.

This little volume has been written to reveal the contrast between the light and darkness; and against this background it has been the author's purpose to portray the picture of a soul struggling after freedom, and struggling in vain until he finds it in Christ.

Onesimus, the hero of this tale, will be recognized as the slave of Philemon, the Christian householder whose hospitality provided a meeting-place for the Church at Colosse. The slave had stolen from his master and escaped to Rome. There Paul found him and he was converted. And thence the apostle sent him back to his master, "no longer as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved." On his journey from Rome to Colosse, Onesimus bore the epistle which is known by Philemon's name. He was also accompanied by Tychicus, to whom were intrusted the epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians. The latter was probably a circular letter addressed to several churches, and may be the epistle to the Laodiceans mentioned in Col. 4: 16. Archippus was bishop of Colosse at this time, and it was in the house of Nymphas that the Church of Laodicea met. Philemon 2. Colossians 4: 15 and 4: 17.

Apollonius of Tyana, who appears in the sixth chapter, was one of the greatest magicians of a magic-loving age. He returned from a journey to the East and was proclaimed a god in the theater at Ephesus at about the time that Paul was laboring

there. Most of the other characters will be recognized as real persons, the friends or foes of Paul.

The scenes, which are laid at Ephesus, are parallel with the nineteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

The author has endeavored to make the story true to the times, and there is hardly an allusion to a custom or circumstance for which there does not exist classical authority. The New Testament critic will surely pardon, in a work of this character, the treatment of disputed facts as certain. And now, with the hope that the book may attain its purpose, this little bird of the imagination is allowed to escape from its cage.

Greendale, N. Y., April 19th, 1900.

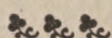
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ONESIMUS



CHAPTER I

THE HOME AT COLOSSE

"A letter for the lady Apphia from her son Archippus."

The lady thus addressed eagerly took the roll from the hand of the lowly-bowing slave, broke the seal, and began to read. While she peruses her letter we shall have time to glance at the room and its occupants.

It was a long, low room, dimly lighted, for the heavy lattice shutters were closed to keep out the autumn breeze blowing strong from the Phrygian hills. The floor was paved with tiles and the walls were of stone. It would have been an uncomfortable place for a lady's sitting room, had it not been warmed by the abundance of richly-colored rugs and crimson cushions spread on the floor and piled along the wall. Other signs of luxury were not lacking, for divans and carved chairs were scattered about, while a marble statue of Venus, arising from the sea, stood in one corner. A chest of drawers and a bronze lamp-stand completed the furnishings of the apartment. Through the open door we be-

hold a court, flooded with sunlight, from which the sound of spinning and the hum of female voices is borne to our ear.

The lady Apphia reclined upon one of the divans, arrayed in a garment of spotless white clasped at the shoulder with a golden fastening, and girt at the waist with an enameled girdle. Her hair, whose dark abundance was already streaked with gray, proclaimed her past middle life; but her dark eye shone with a bright light, and her smooth forehead and finely-cut features proclaimed her nationality. Such a cast of countenance had Grecian Helen, for the possession of whom the Trojan war was waged; and although the noble Apphia was a resident of Colosse, in Asia Minor, her birthplace could have been nowhere else than in lovely Greece.

By the door stood the bearer of the letter, a young man clad in a leathern tunic, and shod with traveling boots laced tight to the knee. He could not have been more than twenty, but his face was traced with the lines of sensualism, and his eyes glanced furtively from under his heavy brows, seeing all, but never remaining long on one object.

The lady Apphia looked up and said, "Does your master yet know of your arrival, Onesimus?"

"No, mistress, for I hastened straight to your apartment, because the letter was addressed to you."

"A letter from our son is his as well as mine. Call him."

In a moment the master entered, while the slave stood again by the door.

"Philemon, Archippus is well and happy and

rejoices to study under so skilled a sophist as Tyrannus," exclaimed the lady, as she thrust into her husband's hand the letter she had just read. Philemon read aloud:

To my mother Apphia, from her son Archippus, greeting:— It seems much more than three weeks since I crossed the Lycus on the old stone bridge, and realized that my childhood days were past and that the great world was before me.

Nymphas and his slave, Manes, were ready to start as soon as we reached Laodicea. In his pleasant company the journey was rapidly made along the banks of the winding Maeander, while the great range of Tmolus, at first almost before us, seemed to pass to our right and then to fall behind. We passed the first night of our journey at Carian Antioch, and the second was spent beneath the stars at the place where our road turned into the great way from Miletus to Ephesus. Manes, assisted by Onesimus, provided excellent meals, and we ate them with the traveler's appetite. Tell Menodora, however, that nothing tasted as good as the cakes, which my little sister gave me amid her tears at parting. I felt homesick indeed when I had eaten the last one.

On the morning of the third day we turned northward through the pass, and the city of Diana was before us. When I was at Ephesus with father, years ago, the sight of the fine buildings impressed me most; but now the thought came upon me that in Ephesus is wisdom, the mingled wisdom of Asia and Greece, and that within the walls of Diana I too should attain to a knowledge of "the beautiful and the good."

We entered the city by the Magnesian gate, and were soon at the lodgings which Nymphas had engaged. They are not large, but richly furnished and central to all places of interest. Mount Coressus is behind us, and our door looks out upon the forum and the great gymnasium beyond. It is only a short distance to the stadium and the Coressian gate, through which the road leads to the temple of the great goddess. Baths and wine-shops are at hand.

Nymphas rents our chambers from an old Jew, named Alex-

ander, who deals in silver, gold and copper on the Sacred Way of Diana.

The day after our arrival we went to the school of Tyrannus, which is not far from Alexander's shop. He received us graciously, as became a sophist, complimented Nymphas on his desire for wisdom, even though surrounded by all the pleasures which wealth affords. I noticed, however, that he eagerly counted the coins I paid in advance for instruction, as though the attainment of wisdom had not decreased his own desire for gain.

The first day we assembled in his school, he told us that absolute truth was beyond the ability of man to obtain, but that the purpose of all philosophy was to find the relative good most necessary for man. Some philosophers, as Epicurus, had declared this good to consist in personal enjoyment, while others, as Zeno, had sought it in harmony with nature. At present, he said, the tendency of each philosopher is to find the gems in the writings of all his predecessors, leaving the rest to the devotees of each system. His purpose is to explain the systems of all, allowing us to choose the one we prefer; or to do as he himself does, adopt something from each, the whole of none. He accordingly is lecturing at present on the idea of deity in the human mind, even seeking for truth concerning the first cause in the priestly mysteries of Egypt. We also study history and rhetoric, and practice daily in the gymnasium.

There are several young men with whom I have become somewhat acquainted, and I shall enjoy life better as my acquaintance increases.

Onesimus is not as useful as Manes, the slave of Nymphas; and while I am in school he spends most of his time in the wine-shops gossiping with the other slaves.

I am looking forward with pleasure to the great feast of Diana, when father, mother and sister, and so many friends from dear old Colosse will visit Ephesus and I shall see them all again.

And so farewell.

Your son,

ARCHIPPUS.

As Philemon began to read this letter, the figure of a young girl appeared in the doorway, and passing by the waiting slave, she quietly seated herself on the cushion at Apphia's feet. She too was dressed in a garment of wool as white as snow, loosely gathered about her slender form, leaving the white arms bare.

As she looked up into the face of Philemon, his own seemed to be reflected in hers; for the kindly gray eyes, the rosy cheeks, the full red lips of the elderly man were retraced in smaller and more beautiful lines under her wealth of golden hair.

She must be her father's child, showing like him, descent, not from the heroes of Attica, her mother's native land, but from the fair-skinned shepherds of the Euxine coasts.

"O mother," broke in the girlish voice as the father ceased his reading, "I am sure Archippus will become a great sophist and bring honor to us all in the schools of Ephesus. Maybe when he has learned everything, and his fame is spread abroad, he may teach in Athens or even go to Rome."

"The gods have granted you a wise brother, Menodora," replied Apphia, "and I doubt not we shall all be proud of him."

"I am glad the boy is fond of study," observed the father, "for in these days it is the philosopher who makes money as well as fame. Only to-day I was talking with the wool merchants who brought in their stock from Bithynia, and they say that business has never been worse since the days of our fathers in the Roman wars."

"There was a rumor of the death of Claudius Caesar in the agora to-day which disquieted trade somewhat.

"Theron came to me during the morning and asked concerning the school of Tyrannus, and I told him what I knew of it and my reasons for sending Archippus there."

"Who is Theron?" said Apphia.

"He is a merchant in scarlet goods, lately come from Thyatira, and I suppose he is considering the education of his son Epaphras," replied Philemon.

"Onesimus, you lazy slave," said the master, turning quickly towards the door, "the sun is low and the hands have ceased work. You may go to the slaves' quarters for the night, and to-morrow I will send you back to Ephesus. It is not fitting that Archippus should be left without any attendant."

Onesimus, thus addressed, bowed low and passed into the court.

A large open space it was, paved with stone, with a tank of water in the center. On each side were the walls of the one-storied, flat-roofed house; the doors and windows of which were arranged without apparent order. Under a kind of projecting roof at one end were piled great heaps of wool, and six or seven female slaves were just putting away their daily task.

"Ah, my Stephanion, I have seen more beautiful girls than you on my journey," said the young man in a low tone, as he passed close to a young slave girl, who blushed angrily and turned away.

It was no place for dalliance, this entrance to the woman's court, with the master and mistress in the room at the side, and so Onesimus passed through a dark, low passage, and entered another court very similar to the one he had just left.

This was the court of the men. On its left was the apartment of the master, while the slaves' quarters were on the right. These Onesimus entered and found himself in a chamber, or rather series of chambers, dimly lighted from the doors into the court.

The place was destitute of furniture, unless a long stone seat on one side and a few blocks of stone scattered about could be called such. At one end a fire was burning on a brazier, over which hung a large pot, the steaming contents of which was diligently stirred by an old slave.

Two slaves, seated on the ground, were playing at dice, while several others were grinding corn for their evening meal in small hand-mills.

"By Bacchus!" cried one player, "a good throw. The coat is mine."

"Hercules break my back if I give you another chance to leave me naked at this season of the year!" exclaimed the loser.

"Ah, there; you back?" said a slave, looking up from his mill as the form of Onesimus appeared in the entrance. "I suppose you will be too fine to work with ordinary slaves after playing attendant on the master's son."

"He never was with us when it came to work," said another, without even raising his eyes. "I

wonder if he has his tunic full of coppers wheedled from Archippus."

"More likely it is full of stolen gold," was the answer.

"By Venus, he would have spent it all before this in sweets for his little Stephanion," replied the first speaker.

"Now I bet my next tunic!" exclaimed the slave who had just lost his only coat at dice, "that he has found another girl by this time in Ephesus."

Onesimus flushed at these remarks, and perhaps would have struck the nearer of his mockers, had not the old slave looked up from the caldron and said, "Now boys, the master has forbidden all quarreling. It will mean twenty lashes to every one who strikes a blow." Thus saying, he poured out the broth into earthen bowls and prepared to bake cakes, of the meal just ground, on the hearth.

The slaves fell eagerly at their supper, and with the warmth and satisfaction of the food a pleasanter spirit came among them, and they listened willingly while Onesimus told them of his past journey and future prospects.

"You are a lucky fellow to be made an attendant on the master's son," said one, when Onesimus had said that he was to return to Ephesus immediately. "Archippus is a very good master."

"Good or bad I hate him and his," replied Onesimus, "and I shall do as little service for him as possible."

"Thankless dog of a slave!" broke in the old man who had so far been silent during the meal; "who

was it but the master who bought you in the market so sick that the dealer thought to kill you? Archippus himself, a boy of your own age, came to nurse you, and even the noble Apphia made you broth with her own hand. Rather thank the gods that you have a good master, and be content with an easy life."

The remarks elicited approval from the others, but Onesimus muttered something about his freedom, and lapsed into a gloomy silence. Evidently he was one of those who prefer a hard freedom to an easy bondage.

Soon the supper was ended and the slaves, one by one, unrolled the rugs which had lain concealed against the wall, and lay down, each wrapped in his own covering before the fire.

The flame died away. The light of the glowing embers cast fantastic shadows on the wall and became dim. Sleep reigned.

While the slaves were preparing their evening meal, the master of the house was awaiting his supper in his wife's apartment.

In the old days of gods and heroes it was considered an honor for the mistress of the mansion to prepare the food for her husband. But although the increase in the number of slaves, and the growth of luxury had rendered the custom obsolescent, the lady Apphia prided herself on her skill in cookery, and the beautiful Menodora was carefully trained in the art. So while Philemon sat before a glowing brazier which his body servant, Castor, had brought in, engaged in calculations on the price of wool and

hoping for an increased demand for the fabrics of his looms, Apphia and Menodora were preparing supper in the court. Fine fish, captured that morning in the swift-flowing Lycus, simmered above a fire of coals. The white hands of Apphia kneaded the dough for barley cakes, and Menodora prepared a paste of figs, boiled in honey.

Mother and daughter sat by content, while the father ate heartily, and when he had finished and they also had eaten, Menodora brought out her lyre from its place, and to its accompaniment sang the songs of the inspired Sappho.

"Your song makes me think of Archippus," said Apphia, "he was ever fond of music. I hope that he may find friends and home comfort in the distant city. He was always so home loving."

"I wonder who will make cakes for him and mix his wine," sighed Menodora. "He used to say that no one could do it like his little sister."

"Don't worry about the boy," said Philemon, "he is twenty now, and able to take care of himself. To brush with the world will do him good, and he has Nymphas with him anyway."

"Yes, that is a comfort," replied the mother, "Nymphas is four or five years his senior, and his acquaintance with life and natural gravity will be a great help to our Archippus."

"Well do I remember the first day I ever met his father," mused Philemon; "it was in the first or second year of the two hundred and first Olympiad. I was a young man then and had gone to Laodicea on business. A distinguished looking stranger

accosted me in the market, and said he had recently come from Corinth to buy wool for export. He had heard me praised as a man of skill and integrity, and he desired to engage me as his agent at Colosse.

"By the favor of the gods, that was the beginning of an acquaintance profitable to each of us, and soon to ripen into lasting friendship. Many a merry feast have I enjoyed at his house, and it was at one of them, that he, all smiles, presented to his guests a new-born son."

"Was that Nymphas?" asked Menodora.

"Yes, my child, that was your brother's companion. Jupiter grant that he may prove as true a friend to him as his father was to me. Poor boy, he was early deprived of his parents. The elder Nymphas and his wife embarked for Rome at the port of Ephesus. The ship touched at Athens four days later, and then all were well. Alas, it was the fall of the year and voyaging was dangerous. That was more than ten years ago and not one word has been heard of them since."

"Oh how dreadful!" exclaimed Menodora, "Diana forbid that Archippus should ever tempt the fury of Neptune!"

"But what did poor Nymphas do?"

"His father had left his estate in care of his slave Manes, the most faithful creature that ever I saw, worth his weight in gold. He managed the property so honestly and skillfully that when Nymphas came of age not an obol had been lost. He is now the master of a fine estate and a host of slaves, but

he has no near kinsman, at least none with whom he is acquainted; for his father had been a great traveler and had lost track of his family. Manes is, however, of more value to him than ten brethren; and the faithful fellow actually prefers to accompany his young master to Ephesus as a body servant, rather than to remain without him as the steward of the house at Laodicea."

"It is rather strange," remarked Apphia, "that Nymphas should care to begin study at his age, and with his estate to engross his attention."

"The boy is proud, and ambitious to make up for the days he lost in his youth," answered Philemon.

"Oh, how long will it be before we see Archippus?" broke in Menodora, changing the subject.

"If you are a good girl you and your mother shall attend Diana's festival in early summer and then you will see him."

"Let me see, that is five, six, nearly seven months. Oh, it seems as if I could hardly wait that long to see him, and the groves of the great Diana!"

"The time will pass rapidly enough," said the mother, kissing her daughter's forehead. "Be a good girl and go to bed now."

Long after her parents had sunk to rest, in her own little chamber, tastefully furnished, Menodora sat, robed for the night, beside her bed. The room was dimly lighted by a waxen taper burning before a silver shrine of the great goddess Diana. Menodora sank on her knees before the image, her fair hair falling over her like a mantle.

"O great Diana, sprung from Jupiter, hear the

prayer of one who has never let the taper burn out before thy shrine! Grant that my brother, Archippus, may come to know 'the beautiful and the good' and that the truth he seeks may be found of him. May he bring honor to his father's house and himself."

Thus prayed the beautiful girl, her face and form transfigured by her love.

It was only a heathen prayer, addressed to a silver image. But who shall say that He, whom she felt after, and who is not far from any seeking soul, heard not the prayer, and designed to answer it wondrously, above all her thoughts. For already, on that autumn night, more than twenty years had passed since One had stood in far-off Judea, and said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." More than twenty years had passed since He had said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

CHAPTER II

THE SCHOOL OF TYRANNUS

A wintry morning had dawned over the city of Ephesus. It was a morning of the year 808 A. U. C., the third year of the 208th Olympiad; or, to express it in Christian chronology, the year 55 A. D. had dawned upon the world.

The Jew Alexander stood at the door of his shop, his round shoulders muffled in his mantle and his keen gaze turned in the direction of the great theater. Evidently he was awaiting some one. He was a little man, but his feet held firmly to the pavement in spite of the keen wind which came in bitter gusts around the corner. So, sometimes, one beholds a last year's leaf, seared and yellow, clinging tenaciously to its parent stem. About his head was twisted a scarlet hood, and he had drawn his cloak up until collar and turban nearly met, leaving scant space for the appearance of white locks, sallow skin, and small bead-like eyes. His person was enveloped from head to foot in a long garment of gray, girt at the waist with a silken cord.

Two young men, clad in philosopher's cloaks, were walking rapidly down the street. Both were Greeks, as the dark hair, the regular features, and the smooth skin, beneath which the red blood leaped at the kiss of the frosty air, proclaimed. The one was more mature and taller than his companion.

The grace of his carriage showed him to be a man whose youth had developed amid scenes of wealth and refinement, while the play of the soul's light upon his countenance was the reflection of a bright mind and pure heart. The other was more sturdy in build, and there was less of thought and more of fun shining in his honest eyes.

"Thinkest thou, my Archippus," said the older of the two, his handsome face lighted with a smile, "that thou wilt become another Socrates?"

"Why so, Nymphas?" replied the other. "Have I annoyed you with questions?"

"Nay, but as Socrates went campaigning through the snow, barefoot, thou thinkest to prove the superiority of mind to matter by covering thy shoulders with a summer mantle this coldest day of the year."

"Alas," replied the other, "it is no contempt for nature that has so arrayed me. Most of my woollen cloaks and mantles are at the fuller's, and the one which I had reserved for to-day has disappeared together with that rascally slave, Onesimus. I suppose that even now he is drinking wine in some shop, dressed in the garb of a philosopher."

"Be not too philosophical in your treatment of slaves," replied Nymphas. "I, who inherited my father's estate in youth, have learned that the surest mercy to many is severity. Have the knave sent to the slave-whipper and I warrant you he will not soon borrow your best mantle again."

"Ah, there is my landlord, the Jew, beckoning to us across the street. What does he want?"

The young man looked up to see the bowing form of Alexander at his door, and to hear his nasal voice saying:

"My lord Nymphas, and my lord Archippus, upon you and yours be peace. Will my lords honor their servant for a moment? You have seen me master of a copper and bronze shop," continued he, as the young men crossed to him, "but recently, business being bad, I have opened the gate of my humble home as a place of rest and recreation to the young men of the schools, and the stranger detained in the port while the sea is closed. My wine is of the best of Cyprus, and my Rachel, more beautiful than Sarah, waits upon my guests."

"Who is Rachel?" asked Archippus. "Is she a new hetæra, just budded?"

"Now the God of Abraham forbid," ejaculated the old man, "that a daughter of mine should be as one of the Gentile hetæra; for the law of Moses says that there shall be none such of the daughters of Israel!"

"We care not for your law or your daughter," interrupted Nymphas. "But, Archippus, since the sun is not yet high and time allows, let us see the new wine-shop and taste of Alexander's wine."

The Jew bowed low and led the way through a door into a court within. Although open to the sky, with only a covered veranda on three sides, the court was warmer than the street; for the Asian sun shone brightly, and the guests were screened from the keen breezes blowing from the Ægean. Moreover, a great pile of red-hot charcoal in the

midst of the court permeated the atmosphere with a gentle warmth.

The young men stood for a moment at the entrance surveying the scene, and then called for wine, which they leisurely drank, seated on a couch near the fire.

"Is it for the birds or for the money?" cried one of the group of guests; evidently a Roman by his speech and dress; presumably a winter-bound passenger on one of the corn-ships in the harbor.

"I never stake birds," replied his opponent, "but I wager ten drachmæ on mine." Thus speaking he drew from a large wicker basket a cock, while the slave of the young Roman drew from beneath his mantle another.

The spectators formed a circle to watch the battle, but Archippus raised his eyes in disgust; for he began to realize that Alexander's wine-palace was rather the resort of freedmen and strangers than of aristocrats like himself. His gaze fell upon the form of the young Jewess, who evidently dealt out the wine to the attendants, for she stood cup in hand beside several large jars of wine. Perhaps he would have languidly admired the graceful form, the raven hair, and the dark eyes of the daughter of a barbarian race, had not his gaze rested upon Onesimus, clad in his master's mantle, leaning over the divan in playful dalliance with the girl.

"O you dog of a slave!" exclaimed he, advancing and seizing him by the coat. "Where were you this morning, when I wanted you after my bath? By Hercules! my patience is exhausted, and the beating

you have deserved this long while, you will have to-day."

Having seized the soft garment from the shoulders of the slave, he hastily wrote a few words on his tablets and, thrusting them into the hands of Onesimus, said, "Here, take this to the slave-market, to the corner where the slave-whipper has his post—What is his name Nymphas? Yes, Discus, that is it,—and when you have learned your lesson, come to the school and await me at the door."

Onesimus put the tablets into the breast of his tunic, and with a face in which the flush of wine had already spread, deepened in color by anger and shame, went out.

"Come, my Archippus," said Nymphas, when he had gone, "do not show your displeasure in the presence of slaves and Euxine pirates. Alexander must have fine ideas of our rank and position to suppose we are inclined to mingle with the rabble."

"Tell your father," said he, turning to the girl, who had stood an astonished spectator of the scene, "that hereafter we may enjoy his lodgings but not his company."

With these words the two friends passed out.

The residences of the free inhabitants more and more gave place to shops and booths of merchandise as the young men advanced down the street, and soon they crossed an open square, passing the stadium on their left and advancing straight towards the massive Coressian gate. Its grim tower was flooded with sunlight, and flocks of sparrows twit-

tered about the beetling eaves, or darted back and forth between the pavement and the roof in search of their morning meal. The sentinel on duty evidently expected no attack, for he lounged beside the oaken portal through which the stream of country people was steadily moving to their business or pleasure within the city. There were weather-bronzed fishermen from the bay of Samos, their bare legs hardened against the cold, and on their backs great baskets full of their finny spoil. Herb-sellers were driving in donkeys laden with the preserved fruits of the farm. Here and there amid the crowds of the tradesmen gleamed the white robe of a priest, the fantastic apparel of the mountebank, or the glittering arms of the soldier. By the stalls of the grocers and butchers lingered slaves with baskets, haggling over the price of master's breakfast. It was the best place in all the city to see tricky, work-a-day Ephesus.

Nymphas and Archippus did not proceed through this gate, however, but turned towards a building, the rear of which formed part of the city wall. It was a three-storied structure and upon the ground floor several dealers in fruits and bread had their shops. The second story was even with the wall, while the third rose above it. By an outside stair, they mounted to the third floor, and, as they enter the schoolroom of Tyrannus, we will take a peep after them.

It is a large room, fifty feet long, by twenty feet wide. The door by which we enter is at the western end, and there is a raised platform at the other end,

with a door which undoubtedly communicates with the tower over the gate. Near this is a kind of reading-desk, with chairs; and behind, in a cabinet, we behold the sophist's tools—rolls of parchment, books of papyrus, the treasures of Greek and Latin literature. Before the platform are ranged seats of wood, and upon the walls hang charts, on which are traced the figures of Euclid, the geometer.

Although this chamber is now used as a school-room, yet the signs of its original purpose are evident, for along the walls are racks for arms, and we are sure of that which we supposed as we approached. The building was erected as a guard-house to the gate, but the strong hand of Rome has made it unnecessary as a garrison building, and therefore it is used as a school.

Let us stand for a moment by this southern window, where the sun pours in, and take a view of the city. On our left rises the elevation of Mount Coressus, its steep sides covered with houses, terrace above terrace to the very top. They are antique structures, very strange to occidental eyes, with their blank gray walls and flat tiled roofs, on which, even at this early hour, some women are hanging out clothes to dry. At the base of Coressus, nay, so close that the natural rock forms part of the wall of the building, stands the stadium. From our elevation one could almost throw a stone over the curved end into the race course within. On racing days the students of Tyrannus can see the sport from their windows, without the expense of

hiring any of the many stone seats, which rise rank above rank in a series of steps, and cast back the sun's rays from their polished surface. Close to the stadium passes the Sacred Way of Diana, which curves out of sight around the foot of the mount. Beyond the stadium we behold the forum with its palaces of justice and its marts of trade; and over the roof of the gymnasium which stands hard by the forum we see something of the dockyards and warehouses; nay, we even catch a glimpse of the heavy top-gear of two or three Alexandrian ships, and the light spars of a galley; but the water of the basin in which they float is hidden. Yonder blue hill to the south, on the further limits of the city, is the range of Prion.

Crossing the room and looking from the northern window over the wall, we behold the country at first almost as thickly settled as the walled city, for prosperous, Roman Ephesus has outgrown all the fortifications of the old independent days. We see the dusty street emerge from under the arched gate, and, dividing into two branches, wind towards the north and east. The northern branch is soon lost to view in a dreary meadow ground, amid which the eye traces the sinuous Cayster flowing slowly towards the sea. It is the road to Smyrna. The eastern branch winds amid groves of trees, amongst which we catch a sight of white and gold, of columns and glistening roofs. It is nothing else than the renowned temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world.

After all, when we have walked the streets and

seen the houses of a city, we are not really acquainted with it. To know Ephesus we must behold the panorama of its history moving before us. Far back in the second millennium before Christ, the Pelasgi and Leleges had built their huts on this spot because nature had made it the gateway of Asia Minor. In the days when Saul reigned in Israel, Androclus of Athens, so the legends say, conquered the city. From his time dates the beginning of the struggle between Greek culture and philosophy on the one side, and oriental superstition and craft on the other. These influences had waxed and waned alternately until the strong hand of Rome had welded all together in one conglomerate.

This is the Ephesus which we behold. It is full of trade, for it is the market of the East and West. It is full of luxury, for its merchants are princes and its traffickers the great ones of the earth. It is full of superstition, for alike the cold philosophy of the West and the hot passion of the East cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" It is full of misery and sin, for since they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them up to vile affections, to do those things which are not befitting, and to receive in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

When the friends entered the room a number of young men were seated in groups, engaged in conversation or reading. Evidently they were sons of the aristocracy, for their long white undergarments gleamed with needle-work and beaten gold

beneath their outer coaks of rich scarlet. High boots laced in front were upon their feet, and their persons were redolent with perfume. They answered the greetings of the new comers cordially, and one of them, looking up from his copy of Homer, said:

"I need not ask the question of the hero of old, 'Who art thou, and whence among men? Where dwellest thou, where dwell thy parents?' for I am thy fellow townsman, just arrived from Colosse, Epaphras, son of Theron."

"Strangers at home were we, but here in distant Ephesus all Colossians should be friends," said Archippus, heartily grasping his hand.

"I knew by reputation your father, the purple merchant.

"Welcome to our school."

"How long is it since you passed the old gate and saw the last of dear Colosse?"

"One week ago to-day I crossed the Lycus and set my face towards Ephesus."

"And the news from home, tell it me, for already three months have passed since I bade my parents farewell, and news is infrequent at this season."

"There is nothing new at home and thy parents are well. Thy father gave my father this for thee the day before I started."

Archippus broke the seal and read:

To our dear son Archippus, greeting:—The gods grant thee health as they do to us at home. Daily art thou in our thoughts and in our prayers. Do thou study to show thyself an honor

to thy father in the great city, and that thy faithful endeavor bring wealth to our family and fame to our name.

Thy father,

PHILEMON, Wool Merchant.

Enclosed was another note in smaller hand, which read:

To my dear brother Archippus, greeting:—I pray for you at Diana's shrine every day, and know that you will become a great sophist. Every one is well at home except that Castor hurt his finger in the mill. My chickens are doing nicely, and I think old Brownie will soon be ready to set. She lays an egg now nearly every day. Since you are gone and are studying so hard, father says I must learn something also. So, besides the lessons on the lyre, I commit some verses from Homer every day.

The gods grant you success.

Your loving sister,

MENODORA.

When Archippus had read the letters he thanked Epaphras for bringing them and said, "Where are you lodging?"

"I stop at the house of one Onesiphorus on the Magnesian Street, a very grave citizen who has several lodgers."

"Does he have any other students?" inquired Nymphas.

"No; there is a young man named Timothy, who seems to be a kind of free attendant on an older man named Paul. There is also a man and his wife, tent-makers from Greece, but I have only saluted them as yet."

"Come to see us," said Archippus, "we have separate chambers, but in one house, belonging to

a Jew on the Way of Diana. We shall be glad to be friends with you."

"Thank you," replied Epaphras, "I shall do so gladly. To be a stranger in a large city is not pleasant."

Just then the door opened and the master appeared, a short, well-built man with a keen eye under heavy brows, and dark hair, already tinged with gray.

"I beg the pardon of my lords," said he, casting his winter mantle into a chair, "but my friend the Asiarch, Glaukos, detained me at the bath. His little son was struck by death recently, and he asked me questions brought home to him by that sad fate; questions concerning a future life. He has always been a proud and rather reserved man, but his only child was as the apple of his eye. It touched my heart to hear his anxious questions, and, indeed, I was sorry to give him but poor comfort. What could I say at such a time? Philosophy is, as the poet says, the guide of life; but the great past when we were not, and the great future when we shall not be, is but feebly lighted by its rays. It is true that the Egyptians professed a deep knowledge of the future life, but after all, what is the bridge of death and the judgment of Osiris, but their expression of our own poets' dreams? For, from our own Homer to the Latin Virgil, their picture of a future life is nothing but the projection of their own imagination beyond the tomb. So I told him to drown his sorrow in wine, if he desired; or rather, as becomes a philosopher, to divert his thoughts by

congenial study or by the service of the state; for no voice ever came from beyond the grave, or is like to come, in spite of the mumblings of all the necromancers of Ephesus."

"What is the law of Moses to which the Jew, Alexander, alluded in my presence this morning?" asked Nymphas, as Tyrannus motioned to him to state the question evidently upon his lips.

"Moses," replied Tyrannus, "was an Egyptian priest who flourished in the days of the great Rameses, fully fifteen hundred years ago. I heard his story when I was a student in Alexandria. It appears that, having collected an army of lepers and other unclean persons, he raised an insurrection against the government. After a time the rebellion was suppressed, but he, with some of his followers, escaped and fled to the wilderness. There they would have died of thirst, had they not by following a wild ass come upon springs of water. On this account the Jews, their descendants, are said to worship the head of an ass to this day.

"The law of Moses is the rule that he gave his army, still held sacred by the Jews. I have never read it, but you may find copies in a Greek translation in any of their synagogues. When the treasures of philosophers and sages are in our hands, it would seem like a waste of time to study a vile oriental superstition. But if you will take your seats and prepare your tablets for notes, I will begin my lecture.

"We were speaking last time of the third great character of the Ionic school, Anaximenes, and we

shall now proceed to consider a fourth member of this class, Anaxagoras."

Thus the lecture proceeded, only interrupted by the hurrying styli of the students, and a faint echo of the noise in the street below. Once the door was opened and Onesimus entered and took his place in the corner. Wine, anger and pain had left their traces on his face, and his tunic bore marks of blood, which had soaked through from his back when the garment was replaced after his beating in the slave-market. No one paid any attention to him, however.

So the fifth hour came, unheeded; the noise of business became less in the street; the master closed his lecture; and the students prepared to go.

As Archippus and Nymphas were replacing some rolls in the cabinet, and Onesimus, and Manes, the slave of Nymphas, were awaiting them at the door, two men entered. They appeared to be freedmen of the better class and they asked to speak with Tyrannus.

"Tell me," said one, as Tyrannus approached, "does this chamber belong to you?"

"The building," answered the sophist, "is Roman property, but I rent this floor from the proconsul. It is in my control. What will ye?"

"Would you sublet it, then, after your school is dismissed?"

"Perhaps, if I were sure that the purposes to which it would be put are appropriate to a place dedicated to wisdom."

"You need not fear for that, for we wish it, that

Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, may proclaim the gospel herein."

"And who is Paul, and who is Jesus Christ, and what glad tidings does he proclaim? Is he a new sophist come to teach in our midst, or an eastern juggler seeking to profit by the credulity of the people? Verily Ephesus has enough of them already."

"Jesus Christ," broke in the other, who had not so far spoken, "is the Son of God, the Savior of the world, who has brought the truth to us; and Paul is his apostle to lead men to the light."

"Not so fast, young man," answered Tyrannus; "when thou hast learned more thou wilt know that truth is multiform and no one man can bring it. However, I would that my students were as zealous in my defense as thou art for thy master. If thy master is a wise man and his students peaceable, I will rent thee the room after the fifth hour each day, for ten drachmæ the month."

"It is a good offer certainly, is it not Luke?" said the young man who had just spoken.

"The room is well suited to our purpose, my Timothy," replied Luke, "and since the company of the disciples has given us authority to use our own judgment and to spend so much, we will engage it. We will accept your offer," said he, turning to Tyrannus.

And thus it came to pass that Paul separated the disciples and disputed daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

CHAPTER III

STUDENT LIFE IN EPHESUS

Student days are usually the happiest days of a man's life. The sense of freedom, characteristic of childhood, has not yet given place to the cares of maturity, and the burdens of manhood. Already intelligence is quickened and the body and mind rejoice together; the body in the vigor of youth, the mind in the pleasure of new-found consciousness. It is the springtime of life, the time when the warm light of life's ascending sun first causes nature to break forth into bud.

Student character is essentially the same, whether in the priestly universities of Egypt, where the youthful Moses became learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; or whether in the groves of Athens, or upon the banks of the Neckar or the Charles. The average student is ever the same good-hearted fellow, ready for sport and even mischief; but with the purpose of a noble life thrusting hard against the shell of careless gaiety.

As the students are in the closing days of the nineteenth century, so were the young men gathered around the lecture-room of Tyrannus in Ephesus in the middle of the first.

Among these there were no better friends—chums we would call them now—than Nymphas of Laodicea and Archippus of Colosse, while, more and

more, Epaphras of Colosse was admitted into their little brotherhood. His bright wit and gentle manner made him a favorite with the older and more discreet Nymphas, and a trusted adviser of the impetuous Archippus.

Some young men court temptation, and for them the freedom of a great city is their certain destruction; but it was not so with these friends. Pride of family was sufficient to restrain Nymphas from all open vice, while the thought of his mother and sister in distant Colosse was a check on the spirits of Archippus. As for Epaphras, he was one of those rare natures that shed evil and remain ever pure. Thus they walked among the unspeakable abominations of a great heathen city, a city in which the vileness of the east was arrayed in the tempting beauty of the west; and although not pure according to Christian standards, they were marked among their companions for honor and integrity. With them were associated their three slaves, Manes, now an old man, devoted to his master Nymphas, whose childish prattle had been music to his ear; Tychicus, a young slave, recently purchased and presented by his father to Epaphras when he came to Ephesus; and Onesimus, whom we have known before, ever careless and indifferent in the service of his master Archippus, sometimes positively abusive and disobedient.

As a jewel is seen to the best advantage in its setting, so we will best become acquainted with these friends if we see them in their daily life. The first streak of dawn was glowing over the roof tops of

Mount Coressus when the faithful Manes, who slept in the passage before his master's door, sprang up, and aroused Onesimus, who also guarded the entrance to Archippus' chamber. The two slaves then prepared the morning meal—a simple breakfast of bread, wine, and fruit in its season.

“Onesimus,” said Manes, “your master is a fine student. Only yesterday Nymphas told me that he would give half his fortune if he could learn so quickly. But my lord was so busy with his affairs, when he first came of age, that he is old to begin study. The mind grows rusty with age, like yonder hinge; I know that by experience.”

“I don't see that it does me any good that Archippus is smart, for it brings me neither freedom nor money.”

“Maybe you are not proud to belong to a great master,” replied Manes, “but I am. To walk at the head of a troop before his litter, and to hear the people say, ‘There goes the young Nymphas, the richest man in Laodicea,’ makes my fingers tingle with delight.”

Onesimus answered, “If he is so rich, why does he not give you your freedom? You have served him long enough.”

“Freedom! what is there in that word which I have not? Do I not have good food and clothes, time to myself, and a good master to serve? If I could be free to-morrow I would not take it. Well do I remember the morning—it was more than two Olympiads ago—when I bade farewell to my old

master on the deck of the Triton, just over in yonder harbor."

"'Manes,'" said he, 'take good care of my son and property till I come back.'

"'By the mother of the gods I will!' replied I. 'And then I took my young master by the hand to lead him away; but his mother ran after him to give him one more kiss. Then we stood on the harbor wall, and waved our hands as the ship moved out of sight. My old lord is now a shade, for Neptune took him; but the promise I gave him I have kept; and, by all the gods, I will continue to keep it.'"

"Well, you have a good master and that makes some difference," growled Onesimus. "I think you have never had a beating in the slave market."

"I think I never stole my master's cloak, and courted Jewish wine-girls, when I should be attending him," answered Manes with spirit.

"Well," retorted Onesimus, "I am his, they say; and so when I take his cloak it is his yet, is it not? My Jewess, Rachel, is a blossom, and I would leave any master for her."

"I can't reason with you," replied Manes, "but I know what is right;" and taking up a basket of provisions he started toward his master's door.

Soon Archippus and Nymphas, attended by their slaves, were reclining at breakfast.

"Old Pluto must have let his young wife return to earth," said Nymphas, as he looked from the window at a glorious spring morning.

"Yes," answered Archippus, "and I wish we could spend the day in the fields instead of in that

musty old schoolroom; but the sun marks the first hour on the dial and we must be going."

So the two sauntered leisurely towards the Coresian gate, followed by their slaves bearing their tablets and rolls.

When they entered the schoolroom Tyrannus was already there, and the students were assembling. The clepsydra was filled, and the water began to flow from it in a stream which marked the time. The sophist lectured long and slowly on the theological speculations of the philosophers; but was not displeased to be interrupted once and again by questions from the students. When the lecture was completed they listened while one of the students delivered an oration upon Plato's *Laws*, which was freely criticised by both master and pupils. Then followed exercises in geometry, in which Archippus easily led his class, both in the accuracy and rapidity of his solutions. Manes sat on his seat by the door, his eyes full of pride, while Nymphas read a paper for the economic class, on the best methods of opening western markets for eastern products—a paper heard with scant patience by the master. It was against his pleasure that the class was organized; all the thoughts of the sophist being occupied by the abstract speculations of the sages. Reading and criticism of the masters of Greek literature followed until the fifth hour, and then the pupils dispersed; some to the neighboring wine-shops for food and drink; some to their private baths and the company of their mistresses; some to devote the afternoon to sport in the gymnasium, and some to study.

Nymphas, Archippus and Epaphras, as was their custom, repaired immediately to the gymnasium. It was a large square building, and the front wall was decorated with the statues of athletes who had won fame in the contests of old. In the recess above the low door stood a marble Hercules, the lion's skin flung back from his massive shoulder with a careless art which brought into striking relief the knotted muscles of his arms and legs. At the entrance the three slaves were awaiting their masters with covered baskets filled with light refreshments. Within, a glare of sunshine fell on the sandy arena, where, in spite of the noonday heat, a number of persons were playing at discus, or boxing. More, however, clad in the lightest clothing, were lounging under the shadow of the double colonnade which ran around all four sides. The friends walked around the portico until opposite the entrance, where a door led into the bath. Through this they passed into a large, vaulted chamber, the floor and walls of which were of snowy marble. From a curtained skylight the sunshine filtered down in greenish tints upon the glistening pavement.

An attendant took a fee from each of the students, dropping the coin in a wooden box.

"Look at this," said Archippus, approaching the bulletin board, upon which were posted notices of races and gladiatorial shows.

Nymphas read aloud: "APOLLONIUS, MASTER OF THE MAGICIANS, FAVORED OF DIANA, KEEPER OF ALL MYSTERIES, AN-

NOUNCES THAT HE HAS JUST RETURNED FROM THE EAST, AND WILL DISPLAY HIS POWER TO THE WORSHIPERS OF THE GODDESS AT DIANA'S FESTIVAL NEXT. FAIL NOT TO SEE HIM."

"He intends to let us know about it in time," remarked Epaphras, "for it is more than two months yet."

"Magicians are always braggarts," answered Nymphas, contemptuously. "Let's to the bath."

The friends now entered a smaller room where they disrobed. From that they passed into the hot-air chamber, which made their feet restless upon the floor and sent streams of perspiration coursing down their limbs. Afterward came a plunge into a swimming tank of cold water, and then they resigned themselves to the warm bath and the attention of their slaves. Indeed, it was pleasant, after the mental exertions of the morning, to lie in tepid, perfumed water, and then to be rubbed, scraped and anointed by vigorous hands.

When the bath and lunch were over they came out into the portico, where several students were loudly applauding a wrestling match upon the arena of white sand. The naked bodies of the athletes gleamed in the sun as their slippery forms twisted in the contortions of their sport.

"One hundred obloi on Calliches!" cried a spectator in excitement.

"Make it one hundred drachmæ on Calliches!" replied the other.

"And I a hundred on Polycles!" said Nymphas.

"By Diana!" broke in Epaphras, "they are well matched." And so it was. Muscles strained and stood out like whip-cords, and great drops of sweat rolled from their bodies.

"It is mine! it is mine!" screamed the other, as with a mighty effort Calliches lifted his opponent from the ground and dropped him exhausted on the hard sand.

"The bet is yours," replied Nymphas. "Here, take this"—writing a few words on his tablet and sealing it with his finger-ring—"to the money changer's by the way of the theater, and get your drachmæ."

"By Hercules!" cried the other, "I am ready for another trial. Who will bet with me on the discus match about to begin?"

"I have lost enough for to-day," answered Nymphas, calmly.

"Come Archippus, come Epaphras, the sun declines, let us take a walk beyond the city wall this lovely spring evening."

"I am translating Plato into Latin for the benefit of my Latin," said Epaphras, "and I must go home and go to work."

"Oh come with us, my Epaphras," urged Archippus, "and when we get home you shall dine with us and we will help you with your translation."

"Ulysses could not pass the sirens without wax in his ears, and neither can I refuse you," laughed Epaphras; "I will go."

Followed by their slaves the three young men left the gymnasium, crossed the agora, and, passing

through the crooked streets between Coressus and Prion, were soon beyond the Magnesian gate.

The early Asian spring had decked the fields with flowers, and the sky had the promise of summer in it. A flock of sheep, under the care of a youthful shepherd, were nibbling the young grass among the sunken stones of an ancient burying ground. The landscape had that peculiar hue seen only in the infancy of vegetation, while from many a leafy retreat came the song of happy birds. All nature seemed to throb with life, about and above the silent ashes of those who had once been men, but were so no more.

"What a glorious thing it is to be alive!" said Nymphas, throwing himself on a bed of tender grass.

"Yes," answered Epaphras, "to be young and strong, with the prospect of a long and happy life, such as the gods will grant to Nymphas—that is a glorious thing."

A shadow seemed to pass over the face of the other.

"Yet," said he, "I am the only one of my race; and as I spend my life, there is none to whom I can bring happiness but myself. Both of you have parents and others to rejoice in your success, but I have none."

"Oh, you will return to Laodicea, rebuild your father's dwelling and enlarge the business which he began to develop. Then you will forswear all the pleasures of public love for the embraces of some little Phrygian beauty. She will, by her dower, augment your fortune, and by herself, fill

your home with sturdy heirs; for, like Cicero, if you are alone now, you will not be the last of your line, but the founder of it. I wonder you are not married yet, my Nymphas."

"Oh," said Nymphas, with a smile, "I suppose my lot in life is something as you say. To establish a household; to become the chief man in Laodicea; to court imperial favor and obtain some public office; to take a voyage to Rome as is fashionable now-a-days; with a journey perhaps to Alexandria to brush up my philosophy; and then to die, I suppose is about my lot."

"Don't speak of dying to us young men on a day like this," rejoined Archippus. "Why can you not open your house and make it the center of a great literary circle, as Mæcenas did in Rome a hundred years ago?"

"I am afraid that Laodicea is too provincial for such purposes," said Nymphas, shaking his head; and then, playfully, "if you ever come to my door a bankrupt sophist, Archippus, you shall receive food and shelter for the rest of your days."

"I shall not be a bankrupt sophist, for at Athens there are always openings for earnest students; and when a man has made his mark at Athens, the way to Rome is strewn with honor and gold. Both these I shall attain, for I am able to do what I attempt, and my father has enough to back me."

"Well," said Epaphras, plucking some little flowers from between his feet, "I am younger than either of you, and I do not know yet what I shall do; but my hope is to explore some of the mysteries

that are around us like a cloud. Continually I ask myself, why am I alive, and what is life, and what is death, and the beyond."

"Epaphras," said Nymphas, "you are too old for your years."

"Come," said Archippus, "it is growing late, let us return to the city. Epaphras, you are to join us at dinner, and the symposium shall be devoted to the translation of Plato's *Phædo* into Latin as we promised you."

Manes had provided a dinner in Nymphas' chamber, the walls of which were covered with the choicest products of the looms of Thyatira. Statues of poets and statesmen were arranged along the side, and a heavy chest could hardly hold the rolls of finely-written manuscripts which were crowded into it. Niobe, weeping for her children, supplied an exquisite porcelain tank with pure water, while Apollo, driving the chariot of the sun, shed a soft light throughout the room.

"See, I have here something nice," said Nymphas, reappearing among his guests clad in a fresh mantle; "I bought it of the silversmith, Demetrius, who has his shop near our school. He wanted to sell me a shrine of Diana, but I told him that, while I worshiped the goddess, it was at the public altar and not in private. So he brought out this case."

It was a beautiful model of Diana's temple, made not as a shrine, but to hold toilet articles.

"I shall use it," said Nymphas, "to keep my writing materials together."

Manes, assisted by the other slaves, had by this time set the table. The three young men reclined beside the polished board, on which stood a great dish containing a joint of mutton, cooked with vegetables. Onesimus passed water for the hands, and the dinner began. Not a knife or fork was on the table. Each one helped himself to the meat with his fingers, obtaining a share of the more liquid portion of the stew by means of thin wafers of bread, used instead of spoons. When the meal was finished water was again poured over the hands by Onesimus, while Tychicus dried them with a towel.

"Come," said Nymphas, after the board was cleared and the wine cup stood before him, "let us aid Epaphras with his translation."

"I have this much finished," said the latter, shuffling over some sheets of papyrus. "If Nymphas will read the Greek, beginning at the mark, Archippus can correct my faulty Latin."

Nymphas read:

"Well, Socrates," said Simmias, "then I will tell you my difficulty, and Cebes will tell you his. For I dare say that you feel as I do, how very hard, or almost impossible, is the attainment of any certainty about questions such as these in the present life. And yet I would deem him a coward who did not prove that what is said about them to the uttermost, or whose heart failed him before he had examined them on every side. For he should persevere until he has attained to one of two things; either he should discover or learn the truth about them; or, if that is impossible, I would have him take the best and most irrefragable of human notions, and let this be the raft on which he sails through life—not without risk, as I admit, if he

cannot find some word of God which will more surely and safely carry him."*

"Is it not wonderful," broke in Epaphras, "that such wise men can advance proof of a future life and yet it is never quite sure?"

"It is strange," answered Nymphas. "I have thought much on this subject since my parent's death, and can come to no conclusion. If, as the book suggests, the soul is to the body as the music to the lyre, then indeed death is an eternal sleep; but if the soul is a separate entity, then it may live forever. But what is its condition? Are the stories of the poets true, or is the state of the dead so different from our own that we cannot conceive of it?"

"I have always avoided thinking on such matters," replied Archippus; "but since we are talking on the subject, I believe it is as the passage says, impossible to learn the truth unless the gods should send us a message from heaven."

"I shall seek to explore these mysteries," said Epaphras, wistfully.

"Do so then by the aid of philosophy, and not by lying oracles and divinations," responded Nymphas.

"Have you no faith in the wisdom of the sooth-sayers and priests?"

"None in such matters; for I am convinced that they deceive the people for gain."

"Well," answered the other, "in the cemetery which we passed just now, there lies many a heap

*Plato's *Phædo*, Jowett's translation 85.

of ashes which once was as full of life and hope as we are. Young men they were once, studying playing, planning as we do; and now they are gone. Oh! where are they? and where shall we be?"

"I give the riddle up," said Archippus; "let us again to the translation."

"Manes," said Onesimus, who had overheard the conversation while clearing away the table, "our masters are spending their time talking about ghosts."

"They are dreadful things," murmured the old man solemnly.

"Bah!" replied Onesimus; "let me have my freedom and I warrant you I would spend my time in something more interesting than such idle speculations about the shadows of men."

"Don't you believe there are such things?" questioned Tychicus, earnestly.

"Young fool," replied Onesimus, looking contemptuously at the younger slave, "when you have grown older you will find out that there are neither gods nor ghosts; but the masters tell these fables to frighten timid children and foolish slaves like you."

Thus the evening passed, and when the watchman on the street cried out the second watch, Epaphras closed his book, called for a torch, and, escorted by Tychicus, sought his lodgings.

And so another of the many student days had passed in Ephesus.

CHAPTER IV

THE GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED

Shortly after the events just described, as Tyrannus was about to close the school for the day, he remarked, "My friend, the Asiarch Glaukos, will come in presently, and we expect to remain to listen to the teaching of the Jew, Paul, for whom this building is rented after hours. I invite all the young men who so desire, to remain with us; for certainly the philosopher should be interested in so novel a doctrine as his. I have talked with him occasionally, and have found him both intelligent and earnest, absolutely devoted to the propagation of his views. I have also made some inquiries concerning his manner of life, and find that he has been teaching in the city some four or five months, and has caused a great sensation among the Jews and others of the lower classes. Indeed, so great a disturbance has been caused that they have expelled him from the synagogue, and that is the reason why his friends have rented this room for his use. But the most strange thing about him is that he teaches absolutely without pay, not because he is wealthy and desirous of ostentation; but, on the contrary, he is so poor that he is obliged to work at the tent-maker's trade, in the shop of one Aquila, to gain a scanty livelihood for himself. He devotes his afternoons to teaching here, and often he visits from

house to house and discusses his views far into the night."

Just at this moment the door opened and the Asiarch entered, attended by two slaves. He was a tall man, dressed in a purple suit. His face was of that serious cast seen in those who take life earnestly, a characteristic not to be expected in an Asiarch, whose office required that he arrange and superintend in person the games and festivals displayed annually in the Greek cities of Asia. This position, although without salary and involving great expense, was much sought after by wealthy citizens because of the fame and popularity to be gained thereby. To Glaukos, however, it had become a burden and he had resigned his office; but in popular parlance he was known as the Asiarch.

While Tyrannus was greeting his guest, Nymphas said, "Even a dog of an Israelite may drop some bone of wisdom. Let us remain."

"By all means," answered Epaphras with unaccustomed energy. "I have had some conversation with Paul at the house of Onesiphorus. He is truly a wonderful man and his word worthy of consideration."

"All right," replied Archippus, "I will call in the slaves who must be waiting without."

Thus it came to pass that Onesimus heard the Gospel of freedom for the first time while awaiting his master's pleasure.

After some moments there were steps upon the stair and the room rapidly filled with people. They were a motley crowd; small traders of the forum

and laborers from the dockyards, a few persons of the clerk class, and several slaves were among the number. Soothsayers were not absent, and one priest of Diana appeared out of place in his surroundings. The friends were surprised to behold so few Jews, but here and there the face of a Hebrew was seen. Most of the audience were evidently in earnest and anxious to hear; but there were not lacking those, especially among the Jews, who cast looks of contempt and scorn around the assembly.

Presently the door opened and three young men entered, two of whom we saw when the room was rented for the use of the apostle. Then came a man and a woman, and with them the great Paul himself.

The friends beheld a short man, bald-headed, with a hooked nose and bright eyes which shone with an intense luster from under inflamed lids. His head was covered with a turban, formed of one piece of cloth, twisted about his brow. A seamless robe closely fitted his spare form. It was girt at the waist and reached to his sandaled feet. This was the Kittuna, or Rabbi's dress; without which none dare presume to teach in the synagogue. Such a seamless coat it was for which the murderers of his Master had cast lots. Over this robe he wore a square garment, fringed at the corners with four threads of white and one of blue knotted together. He walked rapidly to the platform, saluted Tyrannus, and bowed when presented to the Asiarch.

"Pardon me, Sir," said Tyrannus, "if I beg you to defer somewhat to us to-day. The lord Glaukos

and several of my students are present, desiring to become acquainted with your doctrine. May we beg of your disciples a little patience while you explain to us the rudiments, beyond which they must have advanced."

"With all my heart," replied Paul; and turning towards the students, having raised his eyes for a moment as if in prayer, he began to speak.

And this is the substance of what he said:

"My lords Glaukos and Tyrannus, and ye students of Ephesus, I am glad to address you to-day for I know that ye are seekers after truth. Truth has ever been the search of the wise, and yet the greatest of your teachers have confessed that they could not attain unto it. Has not Plato said, that only if God should send one from heaven, could men attain the truth? Such a one, sent from God, I declare unto you this day, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ. He came to reveal God, for none by searching can find him out; even as the fact that mankind has ever thought the Godhead to be like unto gold and silver and precious stones, proves.

"He declares the divine essence to be not many, but one; the soul of nature as the Stoics say; and yet above nature, as the Epicureans claim. Of him, and to him, and through him, are all things. He reveals God so great and yet so kind that we can call him Father, a truth which the poet dimly discerned when he said, 'We are also his offspring.' He came to lead us back to God, from sin; for God will punish the wicked, and all those who are not obedient to the truth proclaimed. Of this he has

given assurance in that he has raised his messenger, this Jesus, from the dead.

"I and all the other apostles are witnesses of his life, death and resurrection; for although I did not follow him in the flesh, he was revealed to me as to one born out of due time, and commissioned me to proclaim his word to the nations. Therefore my message to you is, a message from God, the Father, that ye repent of your sins and turn to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

He had spoken with such power that his hearers were carried with him even against their will. When he ceased, Glaukos said, "Tell me, did you say that you had seen this Jesus after he rose from the dead?"

"Yes, Sir," answered he, turning towards Glaukos, "none could be more opposed to him than was I, as the Jews of the synagogue will bear me witness. I blasphemed his name and persecuted his disciples; but, while on the way to Damascus with letters from the chief priests to bring the disciples bound to Jerusalem for punishment, I was stopped by him, and mine eyes were opened, and his message put upon my tongue."

"It is marvelous," said the Asiarch, "your words are the words of a madman, but your bearing is that of a true man and a philosopher. We will hear you again of this matter."

Tyrannus said, "It is usual for you to hold a meeting of your students at the time which you devoted to us, and we thank you for your speech. If you have no objection we should

like to remain in your assembly from a friendly curiosity."

"Certainly," replied Paul, "we are glad to have you with us."

Having said this he seated himself and, without more ado, began to sing. At once almost all the audience joined in the song. The words were Greek and familiar, but the thought seemed strange to the listeners.

"O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever."

"Timothy," said the apostle, when the song was ended, addressing the young man who had come in with Luke, "bring hither the roll and read, for my eyes are bad to-day."

Timothy, thus commanded, arose, and read words almost unintelligible to those who heard them for the first time.

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a branch shall grow out of his roots;" words that became more strange and fascinating as the apostle commented upon every sentence. At last when Timothy had advanced to the words, "Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid," Paul broke in, rising from his seat, his whole body trembling with emotion, "I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Every one in the audience was deeply moved, and sobs and cries were heard throughout the room. One after another arose and testified to salvation by

Christ; some confessed their sins; and those before estranged, wept on each other's necks. A strange, mysterious presence seemed to fill the place, so that the word of each seemed to be the appropriate word for all. Decent and in order was the service. But the excitement was so intense that Glaukos clinched his dagger as if for a death struggle, although he had forgotten that he had a weapon; while the faces of the students gleamed pale and drawn, in the gathering gloom.

At last the apostle said, a strange glory seeming to shine from his face, "Brethren, Christ's word is again fulfilled, for we have met together in his name, and he has been in the midst of us. Since the prophet said 'Then they that loved the Lord spake often one to another,' let us meet each other and him at the appointed hour to-morrow. You are his witnesses in the world," added he, "therefore glorify God in your bodies and spirits which are his."

Thus the assembly dispersed, and the three friends walked home, followed by their slaves. Hardly a word was spoken by the way, for the wonderful presence of the gathering seemed to cling like a fragrance to their garments. When within his chamber, Archippus threw himself on the couch, while Onesimus was arranging the rolls brought from the schoolroom. It was not his custom to make a companion of his slave, but to-night he burst out: "Onesimus, did you ever see anything like that? If Apollo himself should address us we could not be more moved. What power is this,

greater than that of any orator, which makes me feel miserable, and yet warms my soul with love?"

"Be not so excited, my lord," replied the slave, "the Jew is undoubtedly a great sorcerer and he bewitches his hearers with some spell. I almost came under the power of it myself, but by an effort I threw it off."

After a few moments of reflection Archippus told Onesimus to follow him as he intended to spend the evening with Nymphas.

Epaphras was already there, and the three friends dined together. The food was hardly tasted, however; for when the heart is full the body is ready to fast.

"Paul is often at your lodging," said Nymphas, addressing Epaphras, "what do you know of him?"

"I have seldom met him, for his time at home does not correspond with mine; but I know he acts like a man driven by some spirit. No effort is too great, and no day long enough for his toils; for which, as Tyrannus says, I cannot discover that he receives any pay. His disciples are often with him in the house, and they seem to have caught something of his earnestness. There are slaves among them, but also many freedmen, both Greeks and Jews. Timothy, Luke, Gaius, Aristarchus, and Aquila with his wife Priscilla, who entered the room this afternoon in his company, are daily with him."

"What do you think of his doctrine?" urged Nymphas with unusual interest.

"It is something wonderful and new. It seems to be founded on superstition, but its results are

beautiful, and I have decided that it is a subject worthy of my investigation. Perhaps it offers a solution for some of the problems that perplex me."

"I was greatly moved also," responded Nymphas, "and I mean to hear him again. Certainly the man reveals the power of faith in his own doctrine, and that puts him in another class from priest and soothsayer."

"Maybe, Epaphras," interrupted Archippus, "he can lead you to some knowledge of the future life, for he said he had seen that Jesus after he rose from the dead."

"Manes, you are a wise old man," said Nymphas, turning towards his slave who stood behind him, "what did you think of it?"

"Truly, master, I can't just arrange it all in my head, but it caught me right here," laying his hand on his heart. "Let me go with master to hear him again."

"Why, my old slave, you shall go as often as you wish."

"Oh, thank you, good master," said the old man, falling on one knee. "Tychicus," continued he, glancing at the young slave who stood behind Epaphras, "says he has begun to study with him, so that he may become one of Jesus' disciples, and he wished me to tell it."

"Is that so, Tychicus?" exclaimed Epaphras, "then you shall teach me privately what they teach you."

"Oh, master, then you are not angry?" cried the slave in delight.

"Angry? you foolish fellow, if the Jew teaches you anything that helps you, all I ask is that you will let me share it."

"Oh, master, master, I have prayed and prayed that you might not stop me, and he has answered my prayers."

"Who has answered them, Tychicus?"

"Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior," said the slave, with upturned face.

"This is new doctrine," said Archippus, "and I fear it will ill agree with established customs, and that the priests of Diana will not be pleased with another deity in her city."

"By Hercules! I had not thought of that," replied Nymphas. "Now I remember that the old silver-smith, Demetrius, stood at his door when we came out of the assembly, scowling like a satyr."

"I was much moved," continued Archippus, "but the feeling is passing off now and I am my old self again."

"It may be well to go slowly in such matters," said Nymphas, "but the subject is worthy of study and the right to investigate cannot be denied to a philosopher. If it is a matter of new deities I think the goddess ought to be able to make room for one more. Agrippa's pantheon contains many gods and they all keep the peace."

"Well, I must be going," said Archippus, "for I have some studying to do. Onesimus, bring me my sandals. Onesimus! where is the slave? Always gone when I want him."

"Here are your sandals, lord Archippus," said

Manes, "let me put them on, for Onesimus slipped out while the conversation was in progress."

At that very moment, Onesimus, with Rachel reclining on his arm, was drinking wine in a small apartment of Alexander's wine-palace.

"My Syrian Rose," said he, "your father would be angry if he knew you were leaning on the breast of a hearer of the great apostate from his faith."

"Nay, hast thou heard the words of that dog?" replied she; "his speech would even pollute the ears of a Gentile like you."

"Sayest thou so, my Rose? Then hereafter I shall fix my thoughts on you and your good Cyprian wine, if my master brings me into his presence again. The thought of one witch drives away the enchantment of another," bending to kiss her on the lips.

Just then angry voices were heard, issuing from Alexander's shop on the other side of the court.

"Cursed be he from the earth, and from the heaven! May his portion be with Absalom, and may Satan capture his soul as it descends quick into Sheol!"

The voice was recognized by Rachel as that of the ruler of their synagogue.

Then Alexander's shrill voice was heard: "He has trampled upon the customs of our fathers, and has taught our people not to circumcise their children, and not to walk according to the law. What sayest thou should be his fate, Father Isaac?"

A third voice replied, "Those who entice others to worship the gods of the heathen according to the

law must be stoned without pity; of how much sorer punishment, think ye, is he worthy who, having learned at the feet of the great Gamaliel, turns aside to teach our children the worship of a crucified magician? May my dagger find its way to his bowels!"

"Of whom are they talking?" asked Onesimus.

"It must be concerning your friend, the apostate Paul," returned Rachel with a smile.

CHAPTER V

THE EVE OF THE FESTIVAL

Harmony may be separated into its component parts; why not discord?

As we listen to the roar of traffic, the confusion of shouts and cries, the voices of the seller and the buyer, near the great Magnesian gate of Ephesus on this eve of the festival of Diana, let us try to catch the various notes of which the discord is composed.

"Figs! figs! fresh figs, just brought from Caria!"

"Wine of Cyprus ten years old! Buy my lords, and drink to the great Diana of Ephesus."

"Silver shrines of Diana, blessed by the chief priest himself! Remember in your homes the festival, and take the favor of the goddess with you, guaranteed to multiply the herds and make the flocks increase. Placed within the home they bring the blessing of children. Buy the shrines of Diana, cheap at twice their price."

"Milk! Milk on the hoof! My goats are fed on the tender grass of Prion. Milk, rich and good! Drink and be refreshed, and praise the gods."

"Mantles of the finest wool! Robes of silk, worth their weight in gold, sold at half price, appointed for the worshipers of Diana! Profane not her courts by appearing there in travel-stained robes. Mantles for worshipers!"

"Love potions after the prescription of the famous Lycus, son of Pandion! Is thy mistress fickle? Buy, and make her thine forever! Oh, maidens, desire ye husbands rich and kind? Buy of me, and rejoice in their embraces!"

"Success! Success in business, love or pleasure awaits him who wears Ephesian letters! Bound upon the breast they cure disease, prevent enchantment, and make the wearer strong! Run not the risks of life without my Ephesian letters, guaranteed genuine!"

"This way, my lords! This way to the house of wine, and the palace of pleasure! Never more beautiful damsels than my master's fresh this year! Enjoy yourselves in the festival of the goddess and forget your toil!"

Light may be broken into the seven primary rays, but it is in vain to try to distinguish the various styles of dress; the black of the sorcerer, the white of the priest, the gorgeous red, yellow and scarlet of the various merchants, who, lined on either side of the street, assailed with words and even hands the stream of men, horses, donkeys and litters pouring into the city through the gate. Over the seething mass of humanity rested a yellow cloud of dust, stinging to the eyes and choking to the throat.

"Make room! make room! Room for my lord Nymphas!" cried Manes, pressing against the human tide, closely followed by Onesimus and Tychicus, who in turn were followed by the three friends.

At last the gate was passed, and in the road without, the peddlers were less numerous and the way less confined.

"Let us wait under the aqueduct," said Epaphras, panting for breath after his struggle through the crowd, "for they must be nearly here."

"By Hercules! There they are now," cried Onesimus, as a company of travelers appeared at a curve in the Magnesian Way.

It was a compact little band. Before it stolidly marched two armed slaves, and behind them rode the master upon a large white horse. He wore the dress of a well-to-do traveling merchant, and a gilded sword hung by his side. We recognize him as the master of the house at Colosse, whose acquaintance we made in the first chapter. Then came four stalwart slaves bearing a litter, from behind the curtains of which, bright girlish eyes were looking; and then two mules followed, loaded with heavy packs, guided by a young slave, while two more armed slaves brought up the rear.

Hardly was the exclamation out of the mouth of Onesimus when Archippus was by the side of the litter, and mother, son, and sister, were clasped in each other's arms. When the first burst of affection was spent, and the more sedate greetings of the rest of the company had been exchanged, Nymphas said, "My lord Philemon, the Magnesian gate was choked even now with people. As we passed, a company of strolling exorcists were preparing to locate their ring in the square, so that it is more crowded by this time. The way is further, but we

will save time by skirting the outer wall, and entering the city by the Coressian gate."

"Let it be as you say," replied Philemon, and so the company passed to the right of the Magnesian gate, and, encircling the wall, arrived in time on the Smyrna road, and a few moments later they were under the shadow of the Coressian tower, with the schoolroom of Tyrannus looming above them on the wall.

"Oh, mother!" exclaimed Archippus, as they passed within the city, "there is our schoolroom! I should like to take you into it."

"I have provided lodgings for yourself and train at the house of a worthy citizen, named Onesiphorus," said Nymphas; "perhaps my lord and lady and their fair daughter would prefer to rest before attempting to see anything of the city."

"Oh! I have thought of Archippus' school by day and dreamed of it by night," exclaimed Menodora; "let us see it right away."

"As you will, my child," answered Philemon, springing from his horse; and so in a few moments they were examining the chamber in which we have heard the words of philosophy taught, and the gospel of salvation proclaimed.

"There is a very remarkable man who holds assemblies after school hours in this chamber," said Archippus; "we often stay to the meetings, and they are the most wonderful gatherings I have ever attended."

"What is their character?" asked Philemon.

"Religion, philosophy and power are the three

ingredients of the system," said Epaphras. "I doubt not that the seed which he plants is destined to overturn the moral, social and religious systems of Ephesus, and to establish a better condition among men."

"Do not think of such a thing," answered Philemon; "for the gods themselves could hardly overthrow the present state of affairs, a condition which has its roots buried in antiquity. Great Diana of the Ephesians is not so easily cast down from her magnificence."

"Who is that man talking to the slaves in the court?" broke out Menodora. "Is that your master the sophist?"

"Oh, no, my Phrygian Lily," answered Philemon; "that must be some tradesman, for Tyrannus would never engage in conversation with slaves."

"That is Paul himself," said Nymphas, looking from the window. "Although he is a Roman citizen, he treats the Asiarch and the lowest slave with the same courtesy; for he says all men are brothers in Christ Jesus."

Just then Paul entered, and Nymphas introduced him to the company.

"My son has been telling me of your power as a teacher and your influence in the city. It must be a great pleasure to a public-spirited sophist like yourself to see the city crowded with the worshipers of the goddess," remarked Philemon by way of opening the conversation.

Paul replied, "The power that I employ is not mine but Christ's; for when I am weak then am I

strong in him. I am glad to see the crowds, not because they are worshipers of Diana, but because such a festival is our sowing time, and you may be sure that the brethren will not allow such an occasion to pass unimproved. Archippus," said he, turning to the young man, "you are interested in the Way; bring your parents to our assembly while they remain in the city."

"We must seek refreshment now," said Philemon, "but at some future time I should be glad to listen to the exposition of your doctrine."

When this was said the company passed down the stairs and started for the house of Onesiphorus.

"That must be the very shop from which my shrine of Diana came," said Menodora, pausing before a grated window in which were tastefully arranged many images and shrines, made of gold, silver and copper, and over which was the inscription, "DEMETRIUS, THE SHRINE-SELLER."

"Come, my little girl," said Philemon half playfully, "you show yourself a country maiden. We must make haste."

As the company moved on, a tall, dark man who had observed them from the rear of the shop, came to the door and gazed after them with great lustful eyes. "Beautiful, by all the gods!" he muttered. "The kind of girl I want."

And so the journey from Colosse was over. When the mother and daughter, bathed and refreshed, were sitting in the women's apartment of their lodging, Menodora said, "Oh, mother, it never seemed to me that the world was so large before.

We have been traveling as fast as a strong man can walk for four days, and we have only just arrived at our destination."

"Yes, the world is wide, my daughter. If you ever visit your mother's old home in Attica, when you cross the barren sea, you will realize its size much more than you do now. When I came to Asia, your father's bride, the ship was driven from its course by contrary winds and, for a week we only saw sea and sky."

"Oh, how dreadful!" exclaimed the girl. "I shall be worried to death if Archippus ever goes to Athens, and shall offer a stag to Diana for his protection."

"I hope that your brother may go to Athens, for no school of Ephesus is equal to the Porches of my native city for education."

"Is Greece so very different from Asia, mother? It seems to me that nothing could be grander than the walls and streets and houses that we have passed to-day."

"Yes the buildings of Ephesus are very grand and the temple of Diana, which we shall visit before our return, is perhaps equal to anything of its kind in the whole world; but I love my native land and can never feel quite at home with the customs of Asia."

"What difference in the customs is there, mother?"

"The thing that struck me most at first, and which I have hardly become used to in twenty-five years, is the greater freedom of the women. In

Greece no freeborn woman is ever seen on the street, and hardly would her husband's friends see her in her own home; but in Asia, you know, any woman goes out as she pleases, and she receives her husband's guests, nay she even sits at table with them sometimes."

"Well, I would rather live in Asia then, if I had to be shut up all the time. How did you ever happen to marry father when you lived way off there?"

"It was through your grandfather's brother," replied Apphia; "he had traveled much throughout the East, and had met your other grandfather, your father's father, on more than one occasion. I was a large girl then, sixteen years old, and my father had tried to arrange a marriage for me but had failed. He was becoming anxious about my future, when his brother arrived from Asia and told him he knew a merchant at Colosse, prosperous and honorable, a Roman citizen and of rising fortunes, who desired to unite his son with a pure-blooded Greek; for his tastes were Hellenic. So the matter was arranged, and your father came to Athens after me. I shall never forget how strangely I felt, curious and sorrowful, when he appeared. To leave my mother and sister was like tearing my heart from me, but your father is a kind husband and I am content. I never saw my mother afterward, and she is now a shade. My sister married a Macedonian and lives at Philippi, and time has healed the wounds that separation made. Sophocles speaks truly when he makes women say, 'When we are

grown up, we are driven away from our parents and our parental gods.' "

"Oh, mother!" exclaimed Menodora, "will I have to marry some stranger and leave you and father and Archippus? I would rather die."

"Trust me, my child,"—smoothing back the fair hair from the white forehead,—"I shall never consent to your marriage with one who takes you very far away. Your father said, only recently, that it was time to find you a husband; but he will be guided in such matters by my advice." At this instant a slave announced a visitor in the court, desirous of seeing the ladies.

"A visitor at this hour!" exclaimed Apphia, reclasping the mantle on her shoulder, "who can it be?"

"It is an image seller, Demetrius by name," answered the slave.

"We will examine his wares," was the answer. "Let him enter."

"I beg a thousand pardons for my intrusion upon the repose of beauty," said the man as he set his case upon the table. "The desire of gain brought me not hither at this hour, nor yet was it my purpose to lighten my darkness in a blaze of loveliness. I came to present for trifling cost a beautiful shrine of our goddess, whose protection is vouchsafed to its possessor. Will the noble lady buy?" drawing from the box an exquisitely-wrought shrine of silver, inlaid with ivory columns.

"See," continued he, as the mother and daughter expressed their admiration, "the glory of the god-

dess within." At the touch of a spring the doors flew open and a golden Diana appeared.

"It is very fine work and I doubt not will bring good luck," said Apphia, testing the quality of the metal with her finger ring. "But we have a shrine similar to this at home, and therefore do not need this one."

"It is only two hundred drachmæ," urged Demetrius, in a liquid voice.

"Two hundred drachmæ? Then it cannot be true silver, for if genuine it is worth at least four hundred."

"Nay, O lady, I have made a vow to sell for half price the finest shrine in my shop to the fairest lady whom I should see to-day."

"So your judgment decided that we were the fairest," replied Apphia, amused. "When did you see us?"

"As you passed my humble door I thanked the goddess that my quest was not in vain."

"Which one of us is it?" laughed Menodora, shaking her golden curls.

"My child," replied her mother, "do not make this man another Paris. Such discussions led to the Trojan war and deluged Asia with blood."

"I cannot refuse a thing so cheap," continued she. "Here is the price of the shrine."

Still the stranger lingered.

"My devotion to our goddess," said the soft voice, "is so great, that I cannot forbear to present a gift to the Star of Colosse, a charm guaranteed to shield the most lovely from all dangers in this wicked city.

Here is a ring formed of a golden serpent, bearing on its jewelled crown mysterious Ephesian letters."

Before Menodora could realize his purpose the ring was upon her finger, and the cold hand was holding hers, while the great dark eyes seemed to gaze into her soul.

"Is it not beautiful? But its beauty is lost in comparison with this."

Menodora drew her hand away.

"Not so small a favor for one so old and so thoughtful of your welfare? Look, my dear girl, upon this ring; thank the goddess for its protection, and forget not the unworthy giver."

"Sir," said Apphia, interrupting, "the ring is doubtless costly, and we appreciate your kindness, but the daughter of a freeborn Colossian receives not gifts from strangers. Menodora, give him back the ring."

"The noble lady is very cruel," replied Demetrius, flushing. "Beware how you despise the token of the goddess' favor."

"Oh, mother, the ring is so pretty!"

"Menodora, give him back the ring. To you, Sir, good-night."

"The she-wolf's cub is very fair," muttered the seller of images as he glided from the room.

When the door had closed, Apphia said, "My daughter, you are yet young and cannot understand the ways of wicked men. But you must never allow a man to look at you the way he did, especially a stranger."

"But, mother, he was nearly as old as father, and

the ring was so beautiful. I did not think he could mean any harm."

"Trust your mother, my child, in such matters. Forget the event, but remember the lesson. Now, good-night, and may the gods give you pleasant dreams."

"I am at your disposal as guide," said Nymphas, when the conversation turned on the coming festival—Philemon and the students were lounging in the bath. "To-morrow there are oratorical contests in the theater, followed by an exhibition of skill by Apollonius of Tyana. He is, as you are perhaps aware, master of the magicians lately returned from the far East, filled with all hidden wisdom. Yourself and family will certainly wish to be present. The next day there are feats of strength and races in the stadium which you must not miss; although I regret to say that the noble Apphia and the fair Menodora will not be allowed to behold the performance. The third day is a day of feasting when every slave is free, and all order is abandoned. Ourselves and guests are invited to a banquet by Glaukos, the Asiarch, on that occasion."

"Yes," broke in Archippus, "he gave me this tablet to present to you, father."

Philemon took the tablet and read:

To the Lord Philemon of Colosse, to him and his, greeting:—
I, Glaukos, citizen and Asiarch of the Ionic cities, request thee to honor us by thy presence at the feast at the fifth hour, the third day of Diana's festival. Allow me to repay in part my debt of hospitality to thee.

"He is a true lord and an honest man," said

Philemon. "Never did a better Asiarch exhibit games at Colosse. There it was that I learned to know and respect the man. We shall be glad to be his guests.

"Archippus, the slaves need a holiday as well as we. The third-day custom has decreed it to them; but let the holiday extend throughout the whole festival for all except Castor my own body servant. Distribute this purse of silver among them, and tell them they are free to the third day at the twelfth hour."

Great was the rejoicing in the lower court when the message was delivered and the money divided among the assembled slaves.

"Now then, you slaves," cried Onesimus from his seat on a wine-jar, "you are going to be free for three days and you whimper your thanks to the master as if it were a great favor; but I tell you, I was going to be free any way; I had made up my mind to that. It might mean a beating at the end of it, but my shoulders are tough.

"By Diana, I wish that old Jew Alexander was less strict. My little Rachel would make a fine companion for a carousal. But she is fast. The old circumcised dog would not let me into his shop if he knew I courted his daughter. Hercules break me, if I believe so fair a flower was begotten by the old yellow skin!

"Ah! ho!"—throwing up one coin after another into the air—"it's freedom for three days. It's wine and women and games, with no Archippus to say, 'Onesimus, fold my mantle.' 'Onesimus, clean my

sandals.' 'Onesimus, here, and Onesimus, there.' I hate slavery and I love freedom."

"Do you know what freedom is, Onesimus?" asked Tychicus.

"Know what freedom is? Well, I suppose it is to do as you please."

"I, too, used to think so," replied the other, "and I never found freedom. If I had a holiday, somehow, something always spoiled it; and when I thought I did as I pleased, there was always a headache or a heartache after it. But at last I became acquainted with the Christians and heard Paul preach. Through them I became acquainted with Christ, who came 'to give deliverance to the captives and the opening of the prison to them who are bound.' So I found that a man might be free, yet the worse slave; or a slave, and yet a free man. For to be a slave is not to wear a fetter, but to love a sin; and to be free, is not to do as you please, but as Christ pleases. I shall use my holiday to-morrow in distributing sheets of papyrus that contain the summary of the Gospel, written by many willing hands, from the mouth of Paul. So I shall be free, for I am doing Christ's will; and what he wants me to do, that I want to do. If I should be at my daily work, however, it would make no difference; for I know that it would be his will, and so that would be my pleasure. As Paul once said in my hearing, 'He that is called, being a slave, is the Lord's freedman.' "

"Umph," replied Onesimus contemptuously, "even if you Christians were free, you would turn

into slaves again, for you hug a fetter as if it were Diana's bracelet, and your symbol is a cross. As for that Paul about whom you talk so much, I have heard him again and again, and know that he has about turned the heads of Archippus, Nymphas and Epaphras, and even the old sophist himself. I suppose when we are all converted, there will not be even a three-day play spell in honor of Diana, but work, work, work; and for rest a snuffle of Psalms. It is bad enough to be slaves in body, as we all are; but, Pluto take me, when I lose my freedom of mind as you have done. Oh, it is wine and women and games, and that is to be free."

CHAPTER VI

GREAT IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS!

The modern traveler who stands amid the ruins of the agora of Ephesus looks upon a scene of desolation. Beneath his feet are the remains of pavements, once trodden by the feet of men who made the earth to tremble. On one side a filthy marsh marks the site of that harbor which bore the commerce of western Asia upon its ample bosom, while the dome of Coressus and the range of Prion, crowned with buildings at the time of our story, are now a tangle of thickets to the very summit. On the east are the ruins of the great theater, the largest remains of this kind in any of Rome's provinces. A great dilapidated wall, hoary with age, encircles the side of a hill, made more convex by the toil of hands long since dust in the chambers of darkness and silence. The statues which of old adorned this wall are fallen from their places, and when the visitor through the crumbling arch has entered the door, he seems to be within the crater of an extinct volcano, rather than in a building devoted to the arts of the poets. Not one of the myriad seats is left in place; while the proscenium, on which the actors performed, and from which the town clerk addressed the people on the day when Demetrius and the silver-smiths with him raised their uproar against Paul, is

nothing but a hill of ruins. Solitude, silence, reign on every hand.

A very different spectacle engaged the eye of the traveler on that May morning long ago. The forum, surrounded by stately buildings, was filled with people. True, the shops of the merchants were closed, excepting those that provided food and drink, which the thirsty multitudes would be sure to want before the day was ended. Tricksters, gamesters, fortune-tellers and every class of that large fraternity which thrive upon the folly and credulity of society, were in abundance, plying their trade on every hand. Under the shadow of the theater a puppet man, with practiced hand, was directing the movements of tiny figures, which danced upon the pavement to the infinite delight of the Ephesian small boy. Yonder, another was gathering his copper harvest, after having mysteriously swallowed half a dozen swords, and gathered eggs from the turbans of the astonished beholders. On the other side a company of trained monkeys were performing feats of agility upon a pole, which might well make the circus actor turn green with envy.

Stout peasants from the country, accompanied by wives and children, munched cakes and stared at the wonders of the traveling juggler. Grave and decent citizens from the neighboring Ionic cities passed amid the crowds on their way to the seats reserved for them within the theater. Burly sailors from the port swore strange oaths, and drank abundantly at the wine-stalls. Foreigners from the banks of the Euphrates and from distant Spain

jostled each other in the throng. Cutthroats and robbers skulked along the walls, and leered meaningly at the costly mantles and well-filled girdles of the honest burghers. Troops of fast young men, already drunk, quarreled along the street, while companies of gayly-dressed girls, whose demeanor proclaimed their class, ogled them from every corner.

And now the blast of trumpets proclaimed the coming of the procession and the people scattered to the walls on either side.

First appeared a company of soldiers, their bronze helmets casting back the light of the morning sun, while above their heads shone the golden eagles of Rome. Behind them came a car, gorgeously painted, and borne by eight slaves. As it passed the people raised a shout, for upon it rode the proconsul, Rome's representative in their midst. The shout of praise became a roar of applause as the Asiarchs, clad in royal purple, each seated on a gilded chair borne by four, passed among them. By their munificence the entertainment was provided. Next came a company of white-robed, bare-foot priests, chanting in unison; and closely following them a host of priestesses, whose clanging cymbals drowned the noise of the crowds. Behind these were the dignitaries and chief estates of Asia, in litters and upon horses; while a squad of soldiery brought up the rear.

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" roared the multitudes traveling beside and behind the procession.

"How great must be our goddess for whom is all this honor," remarked one peasant to a man who stood by him in the crowd, a bundle of papyrus sheets in his hand.

The one addressed seemed to look beyond the crowd, and his reply seemed strangely inappropriate, "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

When the great procession had entered within the theater, and those for whom special seats of honor were reserved had taken their places, the doors were thrown open and the multitude surged in.

From our place by the orchestra, where already a chorus of priestesses are chanting hymns to Diana, we look up at the great sea of encircling faces, rank above rank, to the place where the outer wall rises above the last tier of heads and cuts the blue sky. Nearest to us are the seats of the city officials and of their distinguished guests, and of the priestly orders. Further away we see the faces of citizens and of the free people; yes, we even catch sight of familiar faces. Philemon and Apphia sit proud and complacent, and Archippus, leaning toward his mother, points out this or that eminent person, at whom she gazes through a small cut crystal in her right hand. On the other side the graceful form of Nymphas is bending over the back of Menodora's chair, while her eyes follow every expression of his handsome face.

If the society reporter of a modern paper had been present at the festival of Diana, he could have described no costumes more beautiful than were

those of the wife and daughter of the wealthy citizen of Colosse, Philemon, the wool merchant.

The older woman was enveloped in a robe of white linen, embroidered on the skirt with flowers of beaten gold. This garment extended from her foot to the shoulder, at which the back and front were clasped by gilded butterflies. The excess of material was folded over her bosom, and bore on its lower edge a border of exquisite yellow tracery. Her arms were enclosed in the folds of the ample robe by a series of loops through which the white skin gleamed. This dress was the chiton, perhaps the most graceful garment that ever half revealed and half concealed the beauty of the female form.

Around the shoulder was loosely flung a purple mantle, or himaton of wool, its color appearing more rich because of its proximity to the purity of the dress.

The dark mass of hair was gathered in a knot upon the shapely head, and adorned with a jeweled star.

Doubtless Nymphas could have best described the dress of Menodora, for his eyes observed every detail, from the little white shoe which encased the slender foot, to the gilded fillet which encircled the golden hair.

Her chiton was of the same form as that of her mother, but the material was of pale blue silk, glittering with brilliant stars. Few maidens in Colosse, nay, few maidens in Ephesus, possessed such a garment. Across the deserts of central Asia, over the plains of Babylonia, and amid the mountain

passes of Asia Minor, it had been borne on the back of the patient camel. Philemon was very proud of his daughter, and he had procured this garment for the occasion, even though the expense lightened his heavy purse.

Around the beautiful shoulders was wrapped a himaton of white wool.

Far up we look to the topmost row of seats, given up to slaves and artisans. No familiar face can we recognize at first. Ah, yes, there is Onesimus, clad in a mantle of showy red, evidently new to-day, his brow encircled by a garland. Close to him, nay even resting on his lap, is a woman gaudily arrayed and bespangled with cheap jewelry. The paint upon her face ill conceals its natural coarseness of expression. Although Rachel may be mistress of Onesimus' affections, he evidently finds pleasure in the smile of another when hers is impossible.

And now the priest, who had been engaged in offering sacrifices, announced the omens propitious, and the chorus broke forth again into a hymn. Then the new Asiarch stepped out upon the stage, and, amid a roar of applause, congratulated the people on the occasion, and declared the exercises opened.

First there were exhibitions of dancing and pantomime, through which the people maintained their interest. Then came contests of singing and poetry, through which the crowd sat with scant patience; and at last murmurs, begun upon the topmost seat, became a cry that sounded throughout the whole theater—"Apollonius, our Apollonius, favored of Diana! Let us see Apollonius!"

The Asiarch in charge moved nervously upon his chair, and the poet of the hour hastened toward the conclusion of his poem.

At last the Asiarch arose and said, "Ye men of Ephesus, all present, worshipers of the great Diana, not often is Ephesus more honored than when she is allowed to see and praise one whom Apollo loves, and whom the great Diana has deigned to take into her confidence. He was great before; thrice great is he now, returned like Bacchus from his journey to the East, Apollonius of Tyana, Master of the Magicians!"

As he ceased, through a door behind the stage came a lion, led by two slaves, and drawing a car, in which sat a tall figure dressed in black skins and holding a crooked wand in his hand.

"I am Apollonius, Master of the Magicians," said the man, rising to what seemed an almost supernatural height, and casting his black hood back over his shoulders.

"At my birth the seven stars danced, and a chorus of swans sang. To me the great Diana has entrusted her secrets, for with her I daily commune. The great mother of the gods has presented to me a lion, with which I travel from the river of India to the ends of the earth. Brahmins from beyond the limits of Alexander's empire, Magi of Persia, priests of Egypt, and Druids of the far North are my teachers.

"Behold the power which Diana has bestowed upon me to make the earth to bud!"

Having spoken thus, he placed some seeds in

a pot of earth, and lo, as the people watched, they sprouted and became a plant before their eyes.

"Ye see the power which the goddess of spring has given me over nature; behold my power over the beasts!"

"Leo," said he, addressing the lion which sat upon his haunches beside him, "tell the people of Diana, and of her gifts to me."

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" came a shrill voice from the motionless lips of the lion. "Leto-born, and fallen from Jupiter! All power upon my master Apollonius has she conferred, and he is daily her delight, so that she would take him to herself were it not for her vow of chastity. I, her servant, am given to Apollonius to do his will. Great is Apollonius of Tyana!"

"Ye have seen my power over nature and over beasts," continued the magician, "a power which I could multiply a hundred fold if necessary; now see my power over men, for it belongs to me to kill and to make alive."

When he had said this, one of the slaves, apparently with much trembling, stepped within a large wicker hamper and the top was closed. Apollonius took a sword, and with the words, "Die! Die!" he plunged it again and again through the basket. At first there were groans and cries from within, and then all was still; but the lion licked the blood which ran down upon the stage.

Apollonius then said with a smile, "I make alive! Epanymus, come forth!" and the much-stabbed

slave stepped forth sound and well, while the theater thundered with applause.

"But one more sign will I show to you," said Apollonius, "for at the eighth hour I am summoned to a banquet of the gods on Mount Olympus. Doubt ye that the goddess loves me and wishes to espouse me to herself, when she, at my prayer, is willing to unveil her charms to men?"

"O great Diana, beloved by me; by whom I am beloved; show thy beauties to thy worshipers for my sake. Hear, O Diana, born of Leto, hear!" he cried, waving his arms in the air.

As he spoke a shadow seemed to pass across the stage and hovering in the center to take form. The immense audience became quiet and awe-stricken, as the form of the Grecian Diana, clad in a short gown, her bow in hand, appeared in the air above the stage.

When the silence became oppressive, Apollonius said, "O Diana, show thyself in patron form to thy worshipers of Ephesus."

Gradually the figure faded away in the shadow, but in its place appeared the many-breasted, grotesque form of the Ephesian Diana.

"It is enough," said Apollonius, his voice sounding hollow in the breathless silence, "I join thee, O goddess, presently, on Olympus."

Slowly the vision faded, and when it was gone a roar of applause rent the air from orchestra to velarium, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Great is Apollonius, beloved of Diana!"

"Ye have seen that which has been granted to

few mortals heretofore," said Diana's chief priest, arising with a sarcastic smile upon his face.

"For the sake of her beloved the goddess shows her charms to brutish mortals. What say ye? Can we deny to him whom the gods so honor, a place among themselves? Shall we not greet the beloved of Diana with a title suited to his rank?

"All hail to thee, O god Apollonius!"

"Hail to the god Apollonius! hail to the new divinity!" was the cry; as the multitudes rose from their seats, and waved hands, canes and mantles in the air.

"I must away to Olympus," said Apollonius, as the crowd surged toward the proscenium; and, seeming to grow taller as he retired, he disappeared through the door.

"Ye did well and it was a great success," said the chief priest, in a low voice to two attendants who pressed near him in the crowd. "The machine for the vision was so complicated that I feared a failure. But the spread of the doctrine which Paul preaches is so rapid that the herd must see the goddess or they will lose all faith in her. Ye have done a great service to-day. Hold your tongues and ye shall be richly rewarded."

CHAPTER VII

VENUS IN THE GROVES OF DIANA

“You say you are not going to the stadium with us to-day?”

The speaker was Archippus, and the person addressed was Nymphas. The two friends were leisurely eating their breakfast of cakes, figs and wine.

“Well, no,” was the reply. “Your father, Tyranus, yourself and many others of your friends will make a jolly company. You can easily spare me, and Epaphras can take my place.”

“Epaphras, as you know, is already half a Christian, a Catechumen, I think they call him. It is against his principles longer to attend these games. He was up betimes this morning and went off with Timothy and the others to some meeting that they have to-day beyond the city walls.”

“We might do worse than follow his example, my Archippus.”

Archippus shrugged his shoulders. “As you say, we might do worse; but I like my sports and the honors of life a little too well. Before me is a brilliant career. Oratory still sways the multitudes; and for the skilled teacher of rhetoric there is fame and honor. If I were a Christian I should have to be a preacher of the Gospel like Paul, who, in spite

of ability and worth, receives scant reward for his pains. However, that is not here nor there. Why do you not attend us at the stadium?"

"Your mother desires to visit the groves of Diana—your mother and Menodora. She—that is, they—cannot attend the exercises in the stadium, for women are not allowed. Their stay in Ephesus is short, and I offered to guide them about the groves and the temple of Diana to-day."

Thus it came to pass that while father and son were watching with eager eyes the races in the stadium, the mother and daughter, with Nymphas as guide and protector, passed out of the Coressian gate and entered the groves of Diana.

"Oh!" cried Menodora, her girlish face lit up with delight, "I never saw such a beautiful place in all my life!"

"Well you may say so, my daughter, for we are within the sacred grounds of that goddess whose vision was so marvelously revealed to our eyes yesterday."

The spectacle upon which they looked was surpassingly beautiful. They had passed a moat of clear water, from the inner bank of which arose a low balustrade of marble, sculptured in high relief. Before them extended an avenue of powdered shell, soft as velvet to the foot, unyielding as granite to the wheel. Along it troops of lightly-clad priestesses were dancing and singing songs. Little children, dressed only in laurel wreaths, advanced, singing and strewing flowers before the approaching guests. Two large stags, much begarlanded, and

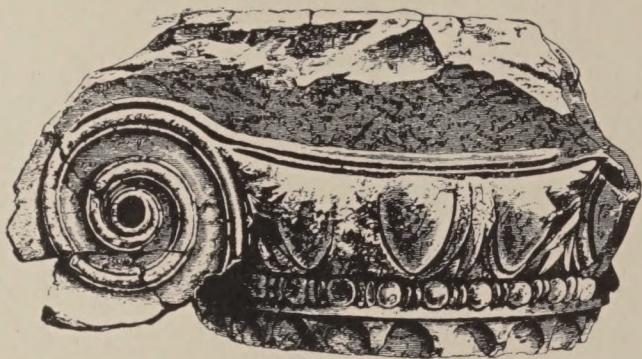
bound by golden chains, were being led by a party of priests to the altar.

At the end of the way their eyes rested upon the temple of the great Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. It was not so much the height or massiveness of the structure that impressed them, as the light beauty of the architecture and the profusion of adornment. A wilderness of stately slender columns, dazzling white, appeared before them. Many of these seemed to grow naturally from the hands of nymphs and graces, and to bear as fruit an army of Amazons, demigods and heroes, against the glistening background of the frieze. Delicate tracery of honeysuckle and of emblematic figures adorned the whole. The inner wall of the cella seemed far away beyond the marble forest, while the smoke from Diana's altar, in the center of the stony grove, arose toward heaven.

"I wish you to take a good look down the portico," said Nymphas, when at last they had mounted the broad stair and stood facing the pro-naos.

Shall we stand with them, O reader, and behold the scene? We see before us a small marble building, elaborately adorned with sculpture and color, situated between rows of graceful Ionic columns. It is as if we stood within a wood of stately firs on some wintry morning. The ground beneath our feet is covered with crusted whiteness; and every smooth trunk, encased in ice, sparkles in the sunshine, while the boughs above form the supports of a canopy of glittering snow.

"How white they are!" said Menodora, when she



FRAGMENTS OF COLUMNS FROM THE TEMPLE OF DIANA
AT EPHESUS

found tongue to express her admiration of the vista opening before her.

"Yes, the temple is built of purest marble, quarried on Mount Prion," replied Nymphas. "The story is that when the Ephesians were planning their first temple, some seven centuries ago, the architects were at a loss to discover a suitable quarry near enough at hand. While pressed by this dilemma, a shepherd named Pixodorus came running to them bringing a piece of fairest marble, which one of his rams had broken with his horns from the cliff."

"Fortunate discovery," declared Apphia; "evidently the hand of the goddess was revealed in that providence."

"Yes," said Nymphas, "the people changed his name to Evangelus, and afterward paid him divine honors, as we decreed yesterday to Apollonius when he wrought his spells for the benefit of the priesthood."

"And rightly, too," answered Apphia. "When one is able to bring immortals within the view of mortals, he must be worthy of divine honor. Why do you smile?"

"I smiled to think how easily the multitudes are deceived by tricks, and how foolish to suppose that the Godhead is like to the images of superstition. It is absurd to imagine that the great First Cause would assume the form of a short-gowned huntress, or of a many-breasted female."

"You speak as a philosopher, young man, and I cannot gainsay you; but I regret that my Archippus

and you both seem to have acquired a kind of contempt for holy things. Do not forsake the gods of your fathers."

"No," replied Nymphas, with a sigh, "at least not till I can find something better. But to my mind it appears that Paul, who tells the story of divine love for sinners and of salvation from sin, has a better right to the name Evangelus—bearer of good news—than had the shepherd who found the marble quarry."

"I know nothing of Paul," answered Apphia, "but I think the teaching of our fathers is good enough for us."

"Do not let us spoil this holiday by argument," broke in Menodora. "Come, tell us, Nymphas, all about the temple and the worship in it."

"There is a proverb that the sun in his course sees nothing else so beautiful as Diana's shrine. This proverb I believed till the eve of this festival," remarked Nymphas, coloring. "But if you wish to hear about this temple I will tell you."

"The earliest Greek settlers of Asia, as anciently as the Trojan war, found this spot sacred to an Asian goddess of the earth, not unlike your own Phrygian Cybele. They connected her worship with that of Artemis, and as such she is known to-day; only with the influx of the Romans she has obtained her new name of Diana. But after all, what is in a name? Our goddess Artemis, or Diana of Ephesus, is the fructifying power of the earth, so that we celebrate her festival most appropriately in this month of May. Therefore, also, while the ox and stag are

sacred to her, her most unique symbol is the bee, because it gathers a store of summer sweetness against the winter's cold. For this reason also she is many-breasted, since from the breast of Mother Earth we all draw our nourishment. Sister, or even wife, she is called, of Apollo, for as he, like the sun, is the male force of nature, she, like the moon, represents the female power. So her priests are eunuchs, and her priestesses—the bees we call them—are vowed to virginity. Thus you see, my lady Apphia, that I am almost as great a theologian as Hesiod, and I deny the charge of atheism as vehemently as Socrates. I, too, am learning to see God everywhere, and perhaps I should not be unwilling to offer a sacrifice to Diana, as the symbol of Deity, bringing in the spring. What I oppose is the folly of mistaking the symbol for the reality."

"Do not let us talk philosophy," said Menodora, "tell all about the temple."

"Oh, yes, I am certainly abstracted—the sign of a lover or of a sophist"—looking at Menodora. "It is only right that at Diana's festival you should hear about her dwelling-place, which is at once a shrine, a bank for untold treasures, and a place of refuge for criminals and the oppressed."

"How is that?" asked Apphia.

"None," replied Nymphas, "would dare to touch with profane hands that which is under the protection of the goddess, and therefore men of wealth are accustomed to store their gold and silver in the vaults beneath our feet. As far out as that second balustrade is holy ground; so that no hand of the

law can reach those who are within these precincts. Do you see those evil-looking men sitting against that southern wall? They are probably criminals who are only waiting for night to make their escape from the city."

"What dreadful looking men!" said Menodora.

"Well," continued Nymphas, "as I said, the earliest Greek colonists of Asia found this a sacred spot, though whether there was a temple here at that time I cannot tell. But before the time of Cræsus, the architect, Theodore of Samos, had laid deep the foundations of this mighty pile in the marshy ground of the winding Cayster. Asia and Greece contributed to the building, through a long course of years. At last, amid universal rejoicing, the temple was completed, and the poet Timotheus sang the praises of the occasion."

"How long ago was that?" asked Menodora.

"It must be about four hundred and fifty years," answered Nymphas.

"Why that is an age, and the temple looks as if it was just completed yesterday."

"Oh, my Phrygian Lily, the temple of which I was speaking is not the one in whose portico we now stand. On the night of the birth of Alexander the Great, a knave, called Herostratus, set fire to it and it was burned to the ground. He confessed that he did it to render himself immortal, and he seems to have gained his wish."

"Better an honorable oblivion than an immortality of disgrace," observed Apphia.

"This worthy structure was then erected," said

Nymphas, "and even noble ladies gave their jewels towards defraying the expense. Alexander offered enough treasure to buy a kingdom, if he might be allowed to engrave his name upon the frieze, but his offer was not accepted. Year by year the priests find some improvement possible, and so while the shrine itself is centuries old, the temple is never done."

"What improvements are being made at present?" asked Apphia.

"Just at present the grounds are being adorned with flowers and statuary; but I understand that the next great change will be a covered portico leading from the city to this stair."

"We may wish it was built before we get home," said Menodora; "see how black the western sky is."

It was even so, the sun, which had been shining brightly in the west when they entered the portico, was hidden in black clouds which rolled up from the Ægean, while flashes of lightning and rumblings of distant thunder proclaimed the coming storm.

"Let us take refuge within the temple," said Menodora, frightened at the aspect of the heavens.

"Oh, no," answered Nymphas, "for none but the initiated may enter there; but I know a way to the city through the groves, shorter than by the avenue. Let us hasten."

Under the tall firs, amid well-kept shrubs and flower-beds, past statues of gods and shrines of heroes, they walked with quick steps. The gardens were nearly deserted by priests and people, and so their progress was rapid. Not fast enough to out-

run the storm, however; for just as they approached the bridge of the Selinus, it burst upon them.

"Quick, this way!" cried Nymphas, as he cast his own mantle over Menodora, and darted toward a little grotto, the entrance of which was seen through the trees.

It was only a small recess, one of many artificial resting places provided by the priests for the benefit of the public; but within was a seat and above was shelter from the rain, and they were content. An old woman clad in black had already found shelter within, and so the four awaited together the passing of the shower.

"Ye are worshipers of the goddess," said the hag with a leer, "and yet methink ye should offer a dove to Venus rather than a stag to Leto-born Diana."

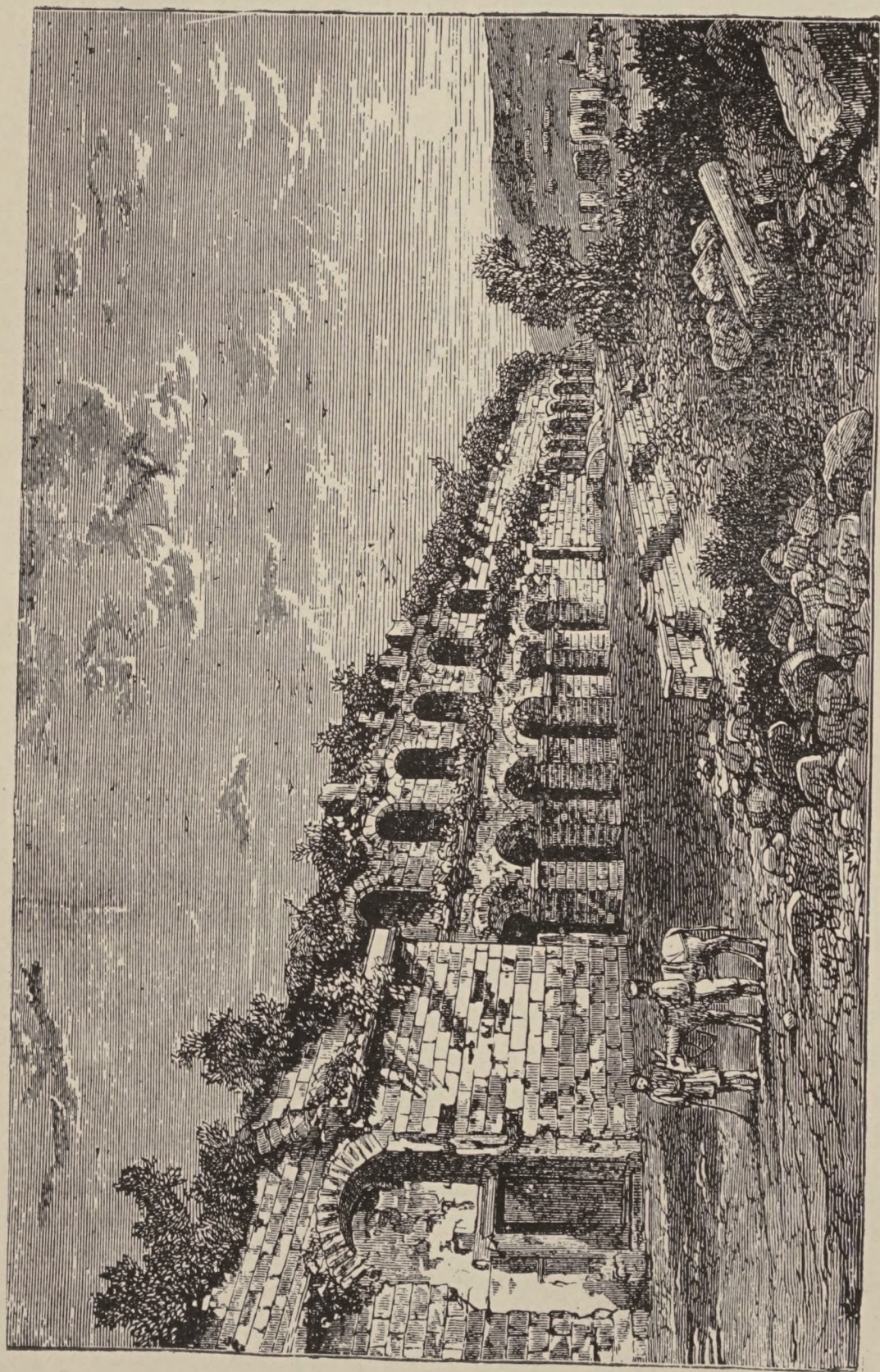
"Silence, mother!" said Apphia; "this girl is my daughter and we have visited the temple under escort of this young sophist, who belongs to a neighboring town with us."

"Ye may be the mother of one now, but ye soon shall be of both," said the beldam, while Menodora blushed crimson and Nymphas dropped his eyes.

"Come, mother," said he, "since you are a sibyl, tell me my fortune and you shall have this silver."

The hag's eyes brightened at the gleam of the coin and she fumbled in her bosom for a parchment roll.

"This roll," said she, "contains the genuine Ephesian letters, which none may read but such as have caught a glimpse of the goddess in her groves. Bound upon the person they render one strong, and



VIEW OF THE REMAINS OF THE STADIUM AT EPHEBUS

to him that knows their meaning they reveal the future. Alack-a-day! the goddess is angry at her worshipers because the despisers of her words increase in Ephesus. Nay, by the preaching of the Crucified, many of the priests and even of the manteis are perverted from her way,"

"Hark ye," interrupted Nymphas, "I asked not thy opinion of Jesus, the Crucified, but concerning my own future."

"The faithful believer shall not go unrewarded," replied the witch; and seating herself she rubbed the roll several times across her forehead.

Then looking intently at the mystic script, she said, "Rich, noble, poor, lost, by poverty wealth, by loss gain. I see thy wife of noble birth rejoicing with thee. Thou art even now turning"—with a motion of her skeleton hand toward Menodora—"and ye shall both be turned."

"Come, come," said Apphia, rather annoyed at the reference to her daughter, "the rain has nearly ceased, let us be going."

The company in the grotto were not the only persons whom the sudden shower had driven to a temporary shelter. The streets, which had been filled with merry-makers, many of whom were drunk and disorderly, were now deserted. Only occasionally did a pedestrian pick his way amid the pools of water, or the covered litter of some wealthy reveler pass, borne by dripping slaves.

Beneath one of the dark arches of the great stadium loitered three sturdy men. Each wore a sleeveless leathern tunic, too short to reach the tops

of his heavy boots. Over each shaggy head was drawn a cap of hog's hide, half concealing the brutal features of the wearer. They were armed with stout clubs.

"By Hercules!" cried one of the ruffians, "how it rains!"

"Thou sayest true, my Demonax," replied the other. "The image-seller cannot expect us to catch his lady love in such weather as this. Pluto take me if I like this little business, anyway. It is dangerous to steal a high-born lady, even if Demetrius does wish it."

"Coward!" muttered his companion, tapping his club on the stone. "It is time for me to leave the city anyway. When once my girdle is filled with the old knave's silver, they will hunt for me in Ephesus a long time before they find me. Demetrius can have his sport, cover his tracks, or face the music; just as he pleases."

"You say well," answered the third; "he need not think that the contract includes, beside carrying off the girl, explaining the matter to the proconsul."

"Hercules break me!" ejaculated the other, who had been peering down the rapidly darkening street; "there comes that fool, Onesimus, slave to the maiden's brother."

"Ah! Onesimus"—as that youth stopped opposite the arch—"come under this shelter and have a friendly drop."

Onesimus already had many drops upon his coat, and to judge by his manner, too many within him. So he replied thickly, "By Bacchus, that I will."

The man handed him a flask, from which he drank heavily.

"I suppose you have seen many new hetæræ within the last two days," remarked his friend, winking at his companions.

"Not one good enough for me," replied Onesimus, "none but Rachel, and she is tied."

"By Hercules!" then it is time there were some new ones. Do you know of any girl who would like to enter the profession?"

"Master's daughter," answered the drunken slave, a dim sense of the absurdity of the statement impressing itself as a witticism upon his beclouded mind.

"You have had enough from that flask," said the fellow, taking it from him; "if you drink more you will not be able to answer questions. Where will we find her?"

"She went with Nymphas and her mother to Diana's Temple to-day. Must be on their way home now."

"Venus sends luck!" exclaimed his questioner. "Two women and one man and the street dark and deserted."

The three men left Onesimus leaning stupidly against the wall while they conferred together in whispers.

At last one said, "Come, Onesimus, the rain has stopped. Take my arm and go along with us."

So they passed down the street.

The ladies and their escort continued their way through the dripping groves amid the shadows of

evening. By the time their sodden sandals were within the gate it was quite dark.

"How great the difference between the present scene and that of a bright market morning," observed Apphia, putting her arm around her daughter's waist.

"By all the gods!" roared a voice, "Onesimus, you swore there was not a hetæra in all Ephesus to your taste, and now Diana has sent us two. Come to me, my little dear,"—seizing Menodora and wrenching her from her mother's grasp.

"Wretch!" cried Nymphas, springing at his throat, "Let the daughter of a citizen go! Let her go, I say!"

The last word was emphasized with a blow from behind that sent the young noble rolling in the mud. At the same instant another attacked Apphia and threw her violently upon the ground.

No man can tell how strong he is until a crisis is upon him. Dazed and bleeding, Nymphas was upon his feet at once. The thought of his duty as protector, the thought of Menodora in danger, rushed into his mind; and it seemed as if the strength of ten surged through his muscles.

He drew his dagger carefully, for he realized it would not do to miss, and crouched to spring.

"Take care where you strike," came the muttering voice. Nymphas perceived that the villain was backing into the darkness, protecting himself from the keen blade behind the fainting form of the maiden. With a curse he lowered the weapon and seized him by the arm. Apphia also sprang for-

ward with a scream, and the four wallowed in an agony of battle upon the slippery ground. Doubtless high honor and desperate love would have won in such a contest had the odds been even. But just as Nymphas, raised upon one knee, was about to throttle his antagonist, there fell upon him a rain of heavy blows. With a groan his hand relaxed its grasp and he sank forward unconscious. Amid her shrieks for help Apphia was tossed to one side, and brutal arms lifted Menodora in their foul embrace.

"Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

The words of this ancient hymn floated through the darkness from a company of stalwart forms. The light of torches revealed the faces of Luke, Aristarchus, Timothy, Epaphras, and others with whom we have become familiar in the schoolroom of Tyrannus.

"Hark! I hear a woman cry," said Luke, pausing.

"It is only the shout of some revelers," answered Timothy; "let us proceed."

"Help! Murder! Philemon! Archippus! Diana save!" rose the cry from a neighboring street.

"Some woman is attacked. To the rescue!" cried Epaphras, as he plunged into the darkness.

* * * * *

The lights in a chamber of the house of Onesiphorus were burning brightly. Philemon and Archippus, looking very grave, were standing by

the couch of Menodora. She was prostrated but unharmed.

Apphia was sitting in a chair close at hand, pale and trembling with agitation.

Menodora opened her eyes and looked anxiously at her father. "Yes, my dear," replied he, mistaking the nature of her mute appeal, "I shall wait upon the proconsul at once and demand of him the capture of your assailants. They shall be crucified every one."

"Oh, not that," murmured the girl. "How is Nymphas?"

"He is in the court below, and the physicians say he will be all right in a few days. Drink this warm wine and go to sleep like your father's own little daughter.

"Only to think," sighed she, closing her eyes, "he was nearly killed in defending me."

Early next morning, the crowds which assembled in the shops and about the markets, saw notices inscribed with the imperial eagle, posted in conspicuous places.

"What is this, my Manto?"—pointing to the proclamation—said an old fishwife to a barefoot, short-clad fisherman, as he deposited a basket filled with the slippery fruit of his net upon her stand.

"It has the Roman eagle upon it," answered he, gazing with doubtful mien at the unknown characters.

"Do you take me for Apollo that you ask me such questions? I can catch more fish than any other man in Samos, but I am not learned."

"Such crimes are an outrage on our city," hotly remarked an aged sophist, as he read the notice. "I hope the knaves will come to the cross."

"Be not so severe," answered his younger companion. "You have passed through youth and know that young blood is warm. Perhaps if her mother had not been present, the girl would not have objected to the embraces of her ardent lovers."

At that moment two heavy, thickly built men slouched up, and eyed the words carefully.

"By all the gods, my Demonax!" remarked one of them in a low tone, "if that drunken slave should tell tales we would be in a bad way."

The other made no reply for he was spelling out the words.

"TO ALL THE INHABITANTS OF EPHESUS:

"BE IT KNOWN TO YOU THAT THE DAUGHTER AND WIFE OF THE GOOD SUBJECT OF OUR CÆSAR, PHILEMON, THE WOOL MERCHANT OF COLOSSE, WERE ATTACKED BY ROBBERS NEAR THE CO-RESSIAN GATE ON THE SECOND NIGHT OF DIANA'S FESTIVAL.

"D DENarii ARE OFFERED FOR THE CAPTURE OF THE RUFFIANS.

"BY ORDER OF THE PROCONSUL."

CHAPTER VIII

ONE VIEW-POINT

Alexander, the coppersmith, was in a bad humor. His yellow skin seemed a shade darker than usual; and his small, bead-like eyes gleamed wickedly from under his shaggy brows. Before him lay a tablet on which he had been figuring, while over the counter of his shop leaned a tall, spare man in the garb of a merchant.

"No, I cannot afford it," said Alexander. "What with tithes and offerings for Judea, and the requirements of my establishment here, you need expect no favors."

"It is not a favor," replied the other sharply, "but merely business. I tell you my line of business is very bad, in fact never worse. I cannot pay the Roman rate on copper; and I am not going to attempt it. More than fifty pounds of copper, purchased from you, remain in bars in my shop; and the gods only know how much more in unsold shrines, which I fear will never sell."

"By the God of Abraham! say not, purchased from me, when you owe me ten thousand drachmæ these two months, beside interest."

"Well, old usurer, you know my bill is good on the agora, and that I will pay you the Ephesian rate if you will give me time—say three months."

"The contract is for Roman, and the Roman rate I will have, so help me Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! I shall sue you to get it, and sell your whole establishment, shrines, slaves and all."

"Not so fast, old Jew; it may be that I am able to harm you or do you a favor. The temple of Diana is to have new rain pipes of copper throughout. The work is great and there is an opportunity for some one to make money. I have influence with the priests, yea, with the chief priest himself. A word from me may give you the job or divert it to one of your competitors."

"My good Demetrius," exclaimed Alexander, his whole face lighted with a smile that seemed rather like the play of the ignis-fatuus over a grave, "we have been friends for many years, and of course when the Roman rate on copper was mentioned, it was but a joke—but a joke. The Ephesian rate is my regular price, at least for friends, and what is a little matter of interest between friends such as we. Take your own time to pay the Ephesian rate and without interest; take your own time, my good Demetrius."

Demetrius smiled a sardonic smile and said, "I shall see the chief priest to-day and shall obtain for you the contract. Of course I shall expect a trifling commission for the favor, perhaps ten drachmæ on a hundred."

Alexander's smile vanished and he crumpled the papyrus in his hand. "Make it five and it is a bargain," he said.

"No, ten I must have or my influence goes to

Cherilus on the Magnesian Way. I know he would pay me more than that for my favor."

"You are hard on me," whined the coppersmith, "but since I must do so, call it ten on a hundred."

"Very good, old Jew, and three months without interest and the Ephesian rate for my debt."

"You are at the advantage," mournfully said Alexander. "It is hard for me to labor and be oppressed with poverty."

"Not much oppressed, I should think," said Demetrius, preparing to leave. "Did I not hear that last week you deposited one hundred thousand drachmæ in the temple vaults for safe keeping? Good-day."

"One word more," cried Alexander, seizing him by the cloak. "You know the bigotry of some in our synagogue—so unreasonable to confound religion with business. If they should hear that I furnished the copper for Diana's temple they would call me an apostate from the faith of Israel."

"You wish to have your name concealed in the contract? Very well, I shall manage to have it drawn up under an assumed name. In that case I shall require a little extra fee, perhaps one hundred drachmæ—but who is that at the entrance?"

"By the beard of Aaron! There are Rabbi Ben Joseph and Rabbi Isaac coming in at the door! This way, my good Demetrius, this way quick! They would be greatly offended to find me talking with an idol maker; this way!"

Demetrius being hastily thrust through a side

door and down a stair toward the wine-court, heard, as he descended, the voice of Alexander.

"The peace of Jehovah—blessed be his name—be upon you and yours;" and the reply of Rabbi Isaac, "What peace can there be in Israel when the apostates of the Crucified multiply daily, even within——" But the door closed and he could hear no more.

Demetrius found himself in the wine-court, with which the reader is familiar. The dark-eyed Rachel was dealing out wine to two attendants, who were kept busy supplying a group of thirsty men gathered in the center of the court. He recognized their class at once and the faces of several.

White-clad priests, dry and dusty, from the procession of the day; and black-robed jugglers, whose tricks of skill had deceived the populace that morning, were resting, until the cool of evening should tempt the people on the streets, when their business would begin again.

"By the mother of all the gods!" said a young priest, drawing his dirty robe around him, "unless these Christians are suppressed, and especially that Paul, Diana will be dethroned and our living will be gone. Did you see the crowds leaving our procession to hear one of them preaching on a side street?"

"Yes," replied another, "and the disaffection does not confine itself to the vulgar herd. They never gave more than a copper for the worship of the goddess; but even among the aristocracy many are abandoning her worship. I understand that the

Asiarch Glaukos, openly condemns our system, and consorts daily in the school of that Tyrannus with the Nazarenes."

"Have you heard the latest?" said a juggler, pocketing the dice which he had been throwing. "Paul, the ringleader of the sect, has been performing many miracles, which have completely alienated multitudes from our arts."

"Sayest thou so, O son of Bacis?" replied the priest; "then it ought not to be so hard to contend with him. As long as he worked in another sphere, we knew not how to treat him. When he begins to use our means we may either expose him, or, by bribes, gain a new member to our fraternity, if we think his skill worthy."

"In that you are mistaken. The gods know that you and I laugh together at the credulity of the people, but he is different. Only yesterday he named the name of Jesus over a woman, bedridden these many years, and she arose, healed. Last week he cured a fever. In fact, so many are his mighty works that the people beseech him to let them carry napkins from his person and as many as do so are perfectly healed."

"He must be a mighty magician," replied the other, "and as such we must learn his secret. Every man has his price. Are the priests of Diana so poor that they cannot buy him?"

"Yes, verily they are too poor, for not a copper will he take, but he works at his trade daily to support himself. His arts are nought; he merely prays to that Jesus and his works are wrought in darkness

or light, at home or abroad. No tricks are his, but genuine miracles, I am convinced of that."

"Then this must be our means," answered his companion, drawing a long, thin knife from beneath his tunic.

"Take care what you do," said a juggler who had not spoken before, "for the people are carried away by his teaching."

"Servants of Apollo," broke in another, "hearken unto me. Apollonius, as you know, has brought many wonderful tricks from the East, and thence, I am informed, comes Paul. He was schooled in the mysteries of Jehovah at Jerusalem. Perhaps the name of Jesus is the key to that power which we vainly seek, and in place of which we deceive the people with tricks. My judgment is that we carefully spy out his formulas, and that by experiments we endeavor to learn his secrets. Are his methods so profound that none of Diana's servants can discover them?"

"Well said," exclaimed a white-haired juggler. Turning to one of the company, whose Jewish features proclaimed his nationality, he spoke, "Thou, O son of Sceva, art from the East, and of the same race. I, the master of Diana's eunuchs, appoint you and your brethren to undertake this task and to discover his secrets."

The one addressed replied: "We are not unqualified for the work, O Master; for my brethren and I have studied his method already. Paul raises his eyes to heaven, stretches out his hands over the sick, and says, 'In the name of Jesus Christ be healed.'"

Just then the door opened and the two Rabbis appeared, holding up their skirts as if fearing pollution. Alexander closely followed. He was saying, "Ye know, O fathers, that it is not my will that my wine-court should become a lounging place for the heathen, defiled by the uncircumcised, as was our holy temple by swine in the days of Antiochus the Mad. But at the time of festival these must be admitted or they would break in."

"Hold your peace, while I state our errand," replied Father Isaac—then turning to the astonished jugglers and priests of Diana—"It is not according to our law for us to hold converse with you, O heathen, but this day is a day of rebuke and of blasphemy in Israel. As the Kenites were eyes to Moses in the wilderness, so may ye be to us. There is an apostate from our faith, that Paul, whom ye know, who turns aside many in Israel, and injures the business of such as you, in this city and throughout the world. Our duty is to crush him, as the worm is crushed under Cæsar's chariot wheel. But first we must know the man and his haunts; nay, we would destroy him by law rather than by violence. Therefore we desire a trusty spy to watch him and his followers. The worthy Alexander has agreed to bear the expense. Who of you will undertake the task?"

"How much will Alexander pay?" spoke up one and another.

"Five drachmæ by the day," said Alexander.

"Too little, old Jew," said a priest of Diana, "this is a skilled labor that ye ask."

"Five is all I can afford," protested Alexander, "the times are very bad."

The contention concerning the price seemed likely to prevent the consummation of the bargain, when Rachel, who had drawn near, said, "Pardon a daughter of Israel if she speaks in the presence of men. May I address the company, Father Isaac?"

"Days should speak and multitude of years should teach wisdom," replied he; "but as it was permitted to Elihu to answer Job, so it is permitted to thee, my daughter."

"Promise me one hundred drachmæ if I furnish you a good spy, and I ask for no more."

Alexander was about to protest, when Demetrius said, "It shall be yours, girl, if you lead us to the fox's lair."

"Well, then, Onesimus, slave of lord Archippus, who studies in the school of Tyrannus, has every opportunity to spy Paul and the Christians. He often comes here. He would make a good and trusty spy, and I am sure we may use him."

"How will we influence him?" asked Rabbi Isaac.

For answer Rachel blushed and shook her raven curls.

"Are you so dry, old Jew?" said Demetrius, "that you do not understand? By Venus, I am old myself, but a young smile for an old beard still thrills me. The maiden will make love to the soft-hearted fool and he will do her bidding."

"Now, by all the prophets!" interrupted Alexander, "no daughter of mine shall consort with uncircumcised slaves."

"Maybe she will not in the future," replied Demetrius with a smile, "but she has already. Every lounge in your court knows that. Ever since you placed her in charge of your wine, Onesimus has come here for something beside drink, and he has gone away drunk with something beside wine."

"By our Father Abraham!" cried Alexander in a rage, "is that so, Rachel?"

"Peace, Alexander," interrupted Isaac, "the thing is of the Lord, that he may deliver our enemy into our hands. Let the daughter of Israel lead on the slave, and by profession of love make him our spy. So shall the blessing of Jael, the wife of Heber, come upon her."

"If ye think it a cheap and safe way," answered Alexander, mollified, "it shall be so. Rachel, accept his love only so far that thou bring no dishonor upon thy father."

"Trust me, father," replied the girl. "Onesimus daily protests his love to me, and as I pipe to him so will he dance. I shall have no trouble in finding out all he knows, and in urging him to discover more. Then," added she, her naturally pretty face suddenly resembling the hard features of her father, "when we have used him all we need, we may crush him and throw him away like a sucked egg."

"The blessing of Jehovah be upon thee!" cried Isaac delightedly.

"I pledge to Diana and the Rose of Israel in a bumper of old Cyprian!" exclaimed the gallant Demetrius.

As the maker of images passed from the court into the street, he was met by the ruffian, Demonax. The fellow had drawn his cap over his eyes, and was evidently in an anxious frame of mind.

"By Hercules!" ejaculated he, falling behind Demetrius so that he might speak with him and yet seem near him by chance, "I dare not stay in Ephesus and I must have my money before I go."

"No goods delivered, no pay," muttered the other without pausing.

"We did our best, and it is not our fault if we could not keep the girl. Would you have us fight a dozen men? We have run the risk, and, by Pluto, I will have my pay."

"There is no great danger of capture. No one knew you in the dark."

"I am not so sure of that. Daitus was fool enough to drag that drunken slave, Onesimus, along with us. I don't know how much he understood, but I am sorry he was at hand."

Demetrius turned suddenly upon him with an oath—"Here, take your pay and be gone. How often must I tell you fellows never to trust my secrets to any one?"

The man grinned as he fumbled his fingers upon the fresh gold in his belt. "I may be back after the trouble blows over, if the noble Demetrius should need any further services."

Demetrius's brow relaxed as he replied. "I never set eyes on a girl but that I enjoy her sometime. Let the noble Colossian take good care of his daughter, for even Jupiter crawled into a lady's

chamber through the keyhole. Farewell, Demonax. Hold your mouth shut and report to me when you return. It may be to your advantage."

Demonax moved away with that peculiar gait characteristic of thieves. Demetrius looked after him a moment, and then called, "Ho! come back." The other turned and the great criminal and the small criminal were again face to face. The former spoke in a low tone, "Did Onesimus know that I sent you to make that assault?"

"No, for your name was not mentioned."

"Are you sure?"

"By the gods, I swear it."

"That is all. You may go. Farewell."

CHAPTER IX

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

The festival of Diana, which brought to many a time of freedom, had only increased the labors of the slaves of Glaukos, the Asiarch. Not that their master was a hard tyrant, for among their associates their lot was reckoned easy; but the feast, which he had determined for the third day of the festival, required all their attention. Glaukos had said to his steward, "Tell the slaves that if they will provide a dainty feast for six, worthy of their master, I will give to each of them five drachmæ, and a week's holiday by turn, instead of the day they lose." Thus stimulated, there had been an unusual bustle among them, and cheerful alacrity was expressed on every face.

From early morning some of the young slaves had been arranging the hall. First, they washed and rubbed the tiled floor and marble walls until they shone. Great silver lamp-stands were then placed, and garlands of flowers hung upon them. Upon the walls, festoons of May roses were suspended. Three couches of oak were spread with purple cushions, and three small tables were set with silver bowls, plates and spoons. Old Philo, the cook, basket in hand, had visited the market in person, to inspect with the eye of a connoisseur, the Sicilian cheese, the fish from the Ægean, and

the game and meat, tender and good, from the Asian highlands.

And now while the pleasure-surfeited multitudes were reveling homeward through the streets; while within the wine-court of Alexander the Rabbis and jugglers had determined on their choice of a spy; within his own hall the Asiarch with head begarlanded, a purple mantle on his shoulders, awaited his guests. The door was opened and Glaukos greeted with a kiss each guest in turn—Tyrannus, Philemon, Archippus and Epaphras.

“How fare the lady Apphia and her lovely daughter, after their assault of yesterday?” asked the host.

“They still suffer from the shock, but are on the road to health, by the favor of Apollo,” answered Philemon.

“And the noble Nymphas who so gallantly defended his charge, and who should have been with us to-night, how fares he?”

“He has many bruises on his body and is too sore to turn on his couch, and upon his head is a great gash, but he is amending,” replied Archippus.

“The deed was a disgrace to our city and should be severely punished. Know ye who the villains are?”

“The streets were deserted because of the rain, and the night was very dark. The few who were abroad were, for the most part, drunk and disorderly slaves and peasants. Not one of them was recognized,” said Philemon. “I waited upon the proconsul in person, this morning, and complained

of the deed. He expressed his sympathy, and even sent his own physician to attend upon the wounded. Nay, he strongly insisted that such crimes must be punished, and declared himself willing to crucify half a dozen slaves, who were abroad at the time, and who may have been among the guilty. I answered that since no one was permanently injured I would not require such an offering."

"It was nobly spoken," replied the host, "the ends of justice are not advanced by the death of the innocent. But who were the rescuers?"

"They were a company of Christians whom our friend Tyrannus knows well. Their names are Luke, Gaius, Timothy and several others, and among them must be mentioned our young friend Epaphras, son of my honored townsman, Theron."

"I am glad to know that a band of Christians were the deliverers," said Glaukos, "and I rejoice to have among my guests such a young man as Epaphras, a youth who brings honor to Colosse."

"I had supposed," continued Philemon, "from reports I had heard at home, that the Christians were of all men the most degraded. My observation in Ephesus contradicts my opinion, for to them I owe the life of my wife and daughter. Strange to say, when I pressed upon them a reward, not one of them would take a copper; even a poor tradesman of the group, upon whom I urged a stater, refused it like a philosopher. 'No,' said he, 'I desire nothing. I only did my duty.'"

"First accounts of the Christians I also have found erroneous," replied Glaukos. "The fact that

such a youth as Epaphras has enrolled himself among them, proves conclusively that they practice nothing base."

While this conversation was in progress, slaves had removed the shoes of the guests, and had poured wine and water, fragrant with balsam over their feet. And now they reclined upon the purple cushions, Philemon in the place of honor next the host. On the second couch were Archippus and Tyrannus, while Epaphras rested upon the third couch with a vacant place beside him.

"Although you have no couch-fellow," observed Glaukos to him, "you are not dishonored; for by your side was the place reserved for the noble Nymphas, whose wounds deprive us of his company."

The banquet now began, and soon upon the table were placed steaming dishes of pheasants and chickens, pork and mutton. Beside them were plates of cabbage, melons, lettuce and beans. The guests scooped up the viands with spoons and flexible pieces of wheaten bread. When all had eaten heartily, Glaukos motioned to the steward, who removed the tables, while an attendant poured water over the guests' hands and wiped them with a towel. Garlands were then placed upon the head of each, during which time Glaukos, with evident agitation, was mixing in the great bowl, water, wine and spice.

At last he spoke with an effort, "My lords, it is customary at this stage of the banquet to introduce flute players, and all kinds of theatricals, for the amusement of the guests; but never again shall

such be permitted in my house. It is customary, as you in past time have seen me do, to pour out a libation to the gods, and to invoke the blessing of Jupiter Savior. I shall pour out a libation, not to the gods of my fathers, but to the Great God of all, who loved me and gave his own Son for me. I shall invoke Jesus Savior, to whom I have consecrated myself and mine."

Oh, reader, to whom the confession of Christ among Christian friends is an ordeal, wonder not that the great beads of perspiration stood upon the brow of Glaukos, when he renounced the gods of his fathers and all the associations of a long life.

There was silence for a moment, and then Epaphras seized a goblet and raising it high, cried, "I, too, am not ashamed to acknowledge myself a Christian, and to drink to Jesus Savior."

In a slow voice, as if searching for words, Philemon said:

"My lord Glaukos, it has been known to me for some time that Epaphras has formally put himself under Christian instruction, a fact which I attributed to his youthful eagerness in the pursuit of philosophy. Nor, indeed, was I ignorant that Tyrannus and many of his students were on good terms with the Christians. But that you, a man past middle life, bound to the ancient systems by every tie of family, association and interest, should forsake them for this new thing, is very surprising. Befriend the Christians if you wish, and indeed as I desire—they have done me a great service—but consider well before you take your stand with them,

for your words to-night will be a sacred secret with us."

"Have I not considered," answered Glaukos almost angrily, "revolving the matter in my mind by day and night? I, too, had dipped into philosophy, as all men of education do, and it had little comfort for me. My position as Asiarch led me behind the scenes, and I know what the worship of Diana is, and, indeed, of all the gods. It is to the priests a means of dishonest gain; to the multitudes a degrading superstition; to the educated, at its worst, a means of deceiving and controlling the masses; and at its best, the symbol of an abstraction. I was proud of our gorgeous temple, and occasionally laid a garland on Diana's altar, and swore by her over my wine. After my child died, as you know, lord Tyrannus, my mind was turned toward the unseen. Hither and thither I looked without avail, until I heard the teaching of Paul in the schoolroom. He immediately impressed me as a true man as the priests did not; and he spoke with authority, as the philosophers did not. In short I followed his teachings and found them the very wisdom and power of God unto salvation. After a long struggle, at last in Christ I have peace."

"And do the leaders of this sect know of your resolve?" asked Philemon, visibly moved.

"Paul has visited me often during the last two months, and I have not scrupled to attend him in public. For the last three weeks, Timothy, whom he calls his own son in the faith, has instructed me

daily. I have promised to be enrolled among the catechumens as a preparation for baptism."

Epaphras sprang from his couch and wept for joy upon the neck of Glaukos. Archippus tasted his wine and set it down again, while his face changed from red to white and red again.

"My lord Philemon," said Tyrannus, "since we are in private, I fear not to acknowledge that the truth of Christianity takes me here"—tapping his forehead—"but it has not enslaved my heart. What would a sophist do among the Christians anyway," he added after a pause; "for as Paul says, 'Not many wise men after the flesh are called'"—this with a sigh.

Again Philemon spoke: "My lord Glaukos, your conversion will doubtless affect not only your own future, but will precipitate a crisis in the city. The Christians increase rapidly, and Diana's votaries are bitter and unprincipled."

"Results are with God," replied Glaukos.

"Oh, Philemon, put yourself also under this teaching, as I have done."

"If I were to remain in Ephesus I should certainly investigate the system, but I must away to Colosse in a few days, and shall not have the opportunity."

"I entreat you then, let me send you a manual of Christian teaching, prepared by the apostle," urged Glaukos.

"I shall receive it gladly and read it carefully," answered Philemon.

And thus the banquet closed. At the door they parted—Glaukos, to return to his own chamber,

where the surging emotions of his soul were calmed by prayer; Tyrannus, to seek his own apartment, where the morning sun looked in upon the wise man, still tossing on his sleepless couch in that agony, which those only know whose minds are convinced, but whose hearts will not yield; Ephras, to hasten in joy to tell the news at the house of a poor dock-laborer, where several were gathered together praying; Philemon and Archippus, to walk with rapid step to the house of Onesiphorus, the elder man deeply impressed, but calculating consequences, the younger man beckoned on, as it were, by two angels; the one in form of a heathen goddess, saying, "This way to honor, pleasure, fame and fortune;" the other, in the form of a Christian grace, saying, "This way to duty, satisfaction, eternal life."

When Archippus had left his father at his door he sought his own chamber.

Onesimus was awaiting him at its entrance. Three days freedom had not improved his appearance. His new mantle was stained with filth and wine, and rent in several places. His eyes were blood-shot, and his hand trembled.

"Is that you, Onesimus?" cried Archippus, when he saw him, "here help me off with this mantle. By Bacchus! slave, you are drunk."

"Not drunk, but happy," thickly articulated Onesimus. "By the great Diana! Master and I are happy; for the Rose of Israel, most beautiful woman in Ephesus, Rachel, loves me and rejoices in my arms."

"Oh, you fool! Who told you that? Do you suppose that old Jew or his daughter care anything for a slave like you?"

"Fact," persisted Onesimus, in a jovial frame of mind. "She says so herself."

"Trust her not, she is fooling thee. If she is anything like her father, she cares for nothing but money. How much money have you left of that purse father gave you? By Hercules! you fool, not an oblos. Go to bed and sleep off your wine."

CHAPTER X

AWAKENED LOVE

Love is the greatest force in the world. In its lowest form it is like a savage beast that creeps in through the door of the senses and tears the soul in its might. In its highest form it is like a strong angel which bears the soul upward, unconscious of self, to the obedience of God and the service of man. True it is even of lower love, that "love takes up the harp of life and smites on all the chords with might." True it is always, when the divine love fills the soul, that "love smites the chord of self, which trembling, passes in music out of sight." Between the animal affection which is lust, and the love of God which is the greatest of graces, is the great realm of human love, the temple of earth's highest joys, pleasures and duties. Its portal may be the senses, but its holy place is in the soul; and thrice happy is he who has the fire of a manly love burning upon the altar before the shrine of a true womanhood.

Nymphas had never had that fire kindled within his heart before. In the spring of youth, his fancy had been led captive once and again, by the bright eyes and waving curls of some one of that numerous class of women, who constituted the only female society, beyond the circle of his immediate family, open to the unmarried man of that day. He had

enjoyed their laugh for a moment, and then turned away in disgust. As he approached maturity, many a father, anxious for his daughter's future, had flattered him, and expatiated on the advantages to accrue to each, from a matrimonial alliance. To all such he had answered, that when his studies were completed he would consider the matter. Now that he was twenty-five years old, he realized that his duty to the state and to his father's name required a speedy marriage. The thought made him sigh, for his manliness revolted from the idea of a marriage for convenience and not for love.

All this was changed with him after the festival of Diana which has been described. Apphia and Menodora visited him during the illness resulting from the injuries received in their defense. To him it seemed that the ache in his bones and the cut on his head were a small price to pay for the vision which glorified his chamber for a little while. It was a small price to pay for the music of those words, "Oh, my lord Nymphas, I am so sorry that you have suffered so much on our account. You are a brave man, and I daily pray the gods to reward your heroism."

So as the fair weather of spring glided into the scorching heat of summer, it was not the temperature which made Nymphas inattentive during the lectures of Tyrannus, or listless in the assembly of the Christians at which the friends were now regular attendants. Manes, whose loving heart appreciated his master by instinct, saw it all, knew it all. His earnest prayers to a new-found Savior for his

master's conversion were mingled with visions of Menodora as a new mistress.

One afternoon in mid-summer there had been a very solemn meeting, and it seemed as if the Spirit of God was about to take visible form and hover in the midst. Glaukos was there arrayed in a white robe for baptism. Beside him sat Epaphras, his face flushed, for he, too, was about to be sealed with the same rite. Manes and Tychicus also were there, robed in white, looking more like the Lord's freedmen than like slaves. There were others about to enter into the covenant—Jews from the synagogue, whom Rabbi Isaac had cast out with curses and spitting; priests of Diana who were to swear allegiance to a new divinity at cost of friends, of home and livelihood; outcast sinners, thieves, murderers, adulterers, effeminate, and abusers of themselves with mankind; for many that believed came and confessed and showed their deeds.

And now the benediction for dismissal had been said, and those who had not yet confessed faith in Christ were sent away with a prayer for their conversion. None might be present at the Baptism and Supper of the Lord but the saints. Onesimus passed out, his face wearing that careless look which denotes absolute unconcern for the spiritual. Tyrannus passed out, his face white and his teeth set. Nymphas and Archippus passed out, the former grave and the latter bathed in tears.

"I can never stand it any longer," cried Archippus, when once they had passed beyond the gate and were walking in Diana's groves. "For these

six months, or ever since Paul began to teach in our schoolroom, my heart has been troubled and it grows worse and worse. Glaukos, Epaphras and even the slaves, have a joy in their hearts and a light in their eyes of which I know nothing. I believe the word of Paul because I see its power. The gods—that is God, I mean—has sent his Son into the world in the person of this Jesus Christ. He has lived, died, and risen again for our sakes. He is himself the Truth.”

“If you believe this, my Archippus,” said Nymphas, softly, “why are you not a Christian?”

“Because” — fiercely — “I am too proud. To accept Christ means that I must cut with all my future and follow in Paul’s footsteps, a path of sorrow and of persecution, as you know.”

“I know,” replied Nymphas thoughtfully. “He says, ‘God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.’ ”

“Are you a Christian at heart?” broke in Archippus suddenly.

Nymphas shook his head and said sorrowfully, “No, I am not, and I know the reason why. Your obstacle is pride of heart and mine is love. You fear to take the step because of ambition, and I tremble on the threshold because I love your sister Menodora.”

Archippus was silent for a moment, and then he said, “I did not know that you cared for Menodora. But why should that hinder you in becoming a dis-

ciple? I would not object to a Christian brother-in-law"—with a faint smile.

"No, you have not seen my love because you have been too much occupied with other things. I fear your father would never let her marry a Christian."

Father has not much faith in the gods," replied Archippus, "but mother and Menodora are devoted to them. If there were more men like Glaukos becoming Christians, and fewer slaves and outcasts, I do not believe he would object."

"It is as Paul says," answered Nymphas, "not many mighty or noble are called."

The friends walked on in silence for some time till they came to the dividing of the ways. One road led to Diana's temple, a symbol of the old heathenism, superstition and sin, destined to be destroyed, yea, already struck with the doom of death, in spite of shining gold and marble. The other way led to Smyrna, a busy mart of trade, a type of the great world to be conquered and regenerated by Christ.

"I can go no further," said Archippus, "I must decide now which it shall be, philosophy or Christ "

There was a long pause while the final battle raged.

"Which is it, Nymphas?"

"It is Christ, with or without Menodora. Which is it, Archippus?"

"It is Christ and his cross," murmured the young man.

The two friends sank on their knees. Just above

them stood a marble statue of Apollo, god of the old world wisdom and art. His stony eyes looked down upon the friends and saw nothing. So the kingdom of the old world looked at the new kingdom of Christ, and saw nothing; but in heaven there was joy among the angels for the two friends saved; an earnest of the joy over a redeemed world.

That evening Nymphas, Archippus and Epaphras sat upon the roof of the chamber of Nymphas, the light of victory in their eyes.

"We must make plans for our new life," said Archippus.

"Well," replied Epaphras, "I do not see that our conversion need effect our immediate conduct. The Lord would rather have skilled laborers in his vineyard than unskilled. I shall keep on with my studies, but I suppose I must let father know of my baptism. I fear he will be angry."

"Yes, I must send word of this home also," said Archippus, "and I dread to do it."

"Glaukos showed courage; and the converted priests and soothsayers show the very courage of Paul, when they confess Christ," remarked Nymphas. "Let us dispatch word home immediately by one of our slaves. You can tell of your conversion to your parents, and I shall state the facts plainly to Philemon, and ask him to grant his daughter's hand to one of the despised sect. I am sure Menodora will become a Christian when she knows what it means."

"That is what we must do," answered Epaphras. "Which slave shall we send? I do not want to send

Tychicus, for he, too, is a Christian; and if my father is as angry as I fear he will be, he might find vent for his rage on the poor fellow."

"Old Manes is too valuable here with us," said Nymphas; "he does his own work and half of Onesimus'. Beside he is too old a man for the journey."

"Onesimus will do on an errand of that kind," said his master. "As he is not a Christian he will not excite my father's wrath, even if he is disposed to be angry. Father is not a man to show great wrath, however. Poor Onesimus! I wish he would become a Christian. I feel more sorry for him than ever before in my life!"

"It is the merciful spirit of Christ working in your heart," answered Epaphras. "I never used to pity a slave, but now it seems to me dreadful that one for whom Christ died should be held in bondage. I have made up my mind to free Tychicus. He is mine, for father gave him to me."

"Manes has earned his freedom and he shall have it as soon as I return to Laodicea," said Nymphas. "I suppose it will only be a nominal matter, however, for he will never leave me."

"Onesimus is better off as my slave than as his own freedman; if he were Christ's freedman it would be different," said Archippus.

"I am anxious to have the matter settled about Menodora," mused Nymphas; "let us go to my chamber where there are lights, and with prayer and thought compose those important letters."

Next morning, while Manes was clearing the

table, Onesimus was lacing his traveling boots for the journey.

"I think I shall walk a little way with you," said the old man, "for the morning is fine and my duties are light. It is so pleasant to be in the fresh air and know that God, my Father, made it all for my pleasure."

Onesimus bent lower over his lacing and muttered to himself, "By Hercules, I must throw the old man off the track somehow. One hundred and fifty miles to Colosse. There and back means eight days at least on the road. No one can tell how many days I may be detained there. Two weeks, perhaps, without a kiss from Rachel, and she made me promise never to go away without telling her. I must manage to see her before I leave the city."

"Here, Onesimus, are the letters and a purse of money for the journey. Give my greetings to all the friends at home. Rest yourself well and return as soon as you can. A pleasant journey there and back. Farewell."

Archippus had seldom spoken so pleasantly to his slave.

"Farewell," said Onesimus, starting from the door with Manes, his undesired companion, for the first stage of his journey.

"I wish," said Manes, as they walked up the street, "I could go home for a little while. I would so like to tell all the household of Christ, and I am sure many of them would accept him."

Onesimus, whose mind was upon Rachel, vexed at the presence of Manes, answered shortly. "Close

your mouth, you old fool. I hope I shall not hear the name of Jesus till I return to Ephesus."

Manes was silent for a moment and then said, "Oh! if I could only bring you to Christ you do not know how happy it would make me. It would change all your feelings and make you a freedman. It seems as if I would be willing to die to see you a Christian."

Onesimus, somewhat ashamed of his former remark, and softened by Manes' words, replied, "I can't help it, Manes. I know that the Christians are good people. I am glad you are one if it does you any good; but I can never be one."

"But why not?" persisted Manes. "Your master and his friends are Christians and would gladly see you accept the faith with them. It seems to me that it would not be very hard for you. Tychicus and I were both Christians before our masters, and so it was harder for us."

"Hard or not, I know when I am well off. Were you ever in love, Manes?"

The old man bowed his head sadly as if remembering a long past and answered, "In love! That is a strange word for one more than three-score years old. I am in love with Christ."

"Confound you Christians!" muttered Onesimus under his breath, "you are always bringing in something about Jesus;" then aloud—"I am in love with Rachel, daughter of Alexander the copper-smith. None so fair as she in all Ephesus! She is rich, too, her father's only child. She returns my love and talks of buying my freedom and marrying

me. Do you think I would give up such a prospect for your religion?"

"I wish you well," murmured Manes; "but Christ's treasure is more than Alexander's."

During all this conversation Onesimus was revolving in his mind the question, how he might free himself from Manes' company, so that he might visit Rachel before he left the city. At last he struck upon this deception and said, "Manes, Philo, Glaukos' slave, was not at the meeting of Christians yesterday; do you know why he was not there?"

"No," answered the unsuspecting Manes. "I did not miss him."

"Well, he is very sick, likely to die, and he wants to see you as soon as possible."

"Now, God have mercy upon him! I must go to see him. Farewell, Onesimus."

"Farewell, Manes."

No sooner was Manes out of sight than with a chuckle Onesimus turned, and walking rapidly over the road they had just passed, was soon within the gate. By narrow, crooked streets, over the summit of Coressus he advanced, and at last by a back door entered the court of Alexander and presented himself before the blooming Rachel.

The dark beauty of this daughter of the East was something very different from the fresh fairness of Menodora. She was rather taller, and had a self-assertive air pervading her every action. Her hair and eyes were black; her features were more regular than is usual in her race. Her snowy feet were bound with sandals of red leather, studded with

precious stones. Her dress was of red, flowing from shoulder to ankle, but girt at the waist with an embroidered girdle. A multitude of bracelets were the only covering upon the white arms. Around her neck was suspended a string of pearls, and a diamond pin flashed above the coil of heavy hair. To the smitten Onesimus she seemed the incarnation of beauty. By a wiser man her beauty would have been more justly judged, for her form was sure to lose grace in a few years, and the face to become utterly coarse. Even now there was something repulsive about her beauty, like the beauty of a snake.

"My dear Onesimus," cried she, springing to his arms and nestling there, "how long it seems since you were last here!"

"It was only yesterday, my darling, but I must leave you now for a few weeks."

"Leave me for what? Oh, how can I endure it?"

"Archippus sends me with letters to his father, and I must go to Colosse."

"Oh, how hard it is to be a slave, driven hither and thither by another," sighed she. "How dreadful that you, a perfect king among men, are in that position! But never mind, it will not be for long."

"That is what you say again and again; and yet your father does not free me," answered the slave. "He is rich; why does he not do it to-day and save me the long journey to Colosse?"

"Wait, dear, be patient, prove your love by trusting me. You said you had letters from Archippus to his father; where are they?"

"Here," said Onesimus, taking from his satchel the pack. "This is one from Nymphas to Philemon; this is from Archippus to Philemon; and here is another from Epaphras to his father."

"Let me read them," making a motion as if to break the seals.

"No, no," protested Onesimus, "the seals must not be broken."

"Not even for me?" replied Rachel, pouting.

"I cannot, my dear. You know it would not be safe."

"Then tell me what is in them."

"How should I know? Nymphas loves Philemon's daughter, and the three friends have become Christians, and I suspect that is what they are about."

"Then I must see them," said Rachel decidedly.

"You are always interested in the Christians and never cease to ask me questions about them. There, there," continued he, as the girl fell to weeping, "I did not mean to speak cross, my dear."

"You will not let me see the letters," moaned Rachel, in well-feigned grief.

"If I could do so without breaking the seals I would show them gladly, but I have done them so much wrong I dare risk no more."

"Why, what have you done?" cried she, drying her eyes.

"Do not tell it to any one, but I was in that band which attacked the ladies, Apphia and Menodora, on the second eve of Diana's festival."

"I heard of it, my Onesimus, how did it happen?"

"It was dark, and I had drunk much wine, and thought of nothing but frolic. Near the great stadium I met certain men whom I had seen before in the wine-shop. They gave me more wine until I could hardly walk. I remember we met two women and a man. I did not know who they were, but I heard cries and screams. Then I knew no more until I found myself at daylight lying against the city wall. That day the story of the assault was all over Ephesus, and the proconsul offered a reward for our arrest. In the evening I was nearly sober and came to see you. At that time you told me how you loved me. I am sorry I was with the knaves, and I fear the cross."

"Hush! do not speak of such things, my dearest," replied the girl, leaning on his breast; "you must never tell any one of it, for if you do you will be killed. Trust me, however, for the secret is safe here in my heart."

"I know I can trust you with anything, my Rose of Israel," answered the enraptured slave.

"Indeed you can, but we must see the contents of the letters, for they may be important. My father can copy the seal in copper and no one shall know it."

"I would rather not," urged Onesimus, irresolutely.

"Oh, you timid!" and before he could object, the letter of Nymphas was opened, and the girl was reading its contents.

"You naughty creature," cried he, springing to his feet, "to put me in danger merely to satisfy your curiosity."

"Trust me, dearest, it will be all right; but I must take the letter to father, to be resealed. I was careful not to mar the impression. Practice playing on my lyre until my return. The music will be sweet because the instrument belongs to me." In a short time she returned with all the letters carefully resealed. "Now I suppose you must go, for the journey is long, but remember me all the way. I shall think of you hourly, while the tedious days go by. But, after all, it will not be very long, and it will be the last of your journeys, for father says when you come back he will have the money ready, and then you shall be free, and we will wed."

"Oh, my Rose," cried the delighted slave, clasping her to his arms, "was there ever such a one as you? Mercury himself, with winged feet, could not travel faster than I shall. Farewell, my love, farewell."

"Farewell, my Onesimus, my freedman," said the girl as the slave descended the steps.

CHAPTER XI

AWAKENED HATE

Love is the greatest thing in the world, and hate is its opposite. If love is an angel bearing the soul toward heaven, hate is a demon driving it down to hell. Love and hate are alike, in that neither considers any sacrifice too great for the altar of its purpose. They are alike as the two poles of the magnet are alike, as the extremes of heat and cold become similar; hence where love is, hate is not far away. So our Lord Christ found; for when he came to love men to salvation, they hated him to destruction. In this sense it becomes true, that when the Prince of Peace appears to bring peace on earth, he brings not peace, but a sword. This the church has proved throughout the ages; for when the light of God's love illumines the page of history, the scowl of the devil's hate is seen darkening the prospect.

So it was at Ephesus. There was love there—the love of awakened hearts, as we have seen. They were the elders of Ephesus whose hearts bled to say farewell to the apostle, and who fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the word which he said, "Ye shall see my face no more." There was love there, the love of hearts, to whom Paul could say—"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom

the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God." There was hate there—the hate of men who had made themselves such slaves to the letter of the Old Testament that they refused the liberty of the New; the hate of men who, digging for gold in the dark mine of Ephesian superstition, refused to come out into God's sunlight. It is in reference to these that Paul says, "After the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus;" and again, "But I must tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost, for a great door and effectual is opened to me, and there are many adversaries." Perhaps it is in reference to this same hate, that at the sunset of his life he said to Timothy, "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil, the Lord reward him according to his works; of whom be thou ware also, for he has greatly withstood our words."

The days had long since passed, when Alexander, the coppersmith, had found it necessary to toil at the sweaty forge. As his wealth increased the furnace had given place to the shop. Thither came priests of Diana, image makers, the craftsmen of many trades, and even representatives of government, to stipulate for the delivery of the yellow composition at so much a pound. Ships from Cyprus and Euboea, from Gaul and distant Spain,

entered the harbor of Ephesus, with cargoes of copper consigned to Alexander the coppersmith on the Sacred Way of Diana.

It is a curious fact that a man's abode comes in time to reflect his character. So this shop resembled its owner in all its appointments. The door was narrow and hard to open. When at last it yielded to the persistent push of the visitor, it gave certain groans and squeaks, as if protesting against all entrance. It went shut with a bang that seemed to say, "Get out again if you can." Strange to say the door on the right side which led into the wine-court was precisely similar. There was one low, barred window at the end, through whose heavy pane the light dimly filtered. Callers frequently noticed that the rays which struggled through became of a sickly yellow color, not unlike the master's complexion. The room was small, low and ill ventilated, for the window would not open and the doors were always kept closed. Along the right wall ran a shelf straight and narrow. It is supposed that this was intended for a seat, to be used by those who found it impossible to stand longer. On the left side was a tall counter, under which was a drawer. Behind this counter stood the only article which suggested comfort in the room, a cushioned arm-chair. Upon the wall was placed a locked closet. Near the window stood an inclined writing desk. Beneath this was placed a ponderous oaken chest, heavily banded with iron, and studded with nails.

The proprietor of this mart of trade was pacing

to and fro in his shop. A white head cloth was wound around his head to form a turban. A close-fitting woolen garment, gathered at the middle by a girdle, descended from his neck to his sandal-shod feet. Thrown over his shoulder was a square mantle with the Jewish fringes upon the border. His face was thin and drawn. Indeed, it almost seemed that the yellow skin was dried upon the skull, but the gleam of his black eyes, revealed the force of the fierce fires burning within. "Ten drachmæ," he mused. "Ten drachmæ to that uncircumcised Demetrius for his favor, the Ephesian rate of money, and no interest beside! Money to be spent on that cursed brood of heathen magicians, that they may help us trap the apostate from the faith. A thousand drachmæ for the temple at Jerusalem—so says Rabbi Isaac. I cannot afford to pay it. No, not unless I make it up in some other way."

Alexander sat down at his desk and looked over his accounts. "A thousand drachmæ for the temple, how can I make it up? Ah! there is Apelles, the merchant, he is easily tricked. I can save a third of the sum in a year, on his bill, by light weight, deducting a little at a time. Yes,"—running his bony finger down the account—"the widow Sarah is behind with her rent. I can easily make her pay double interest; or I will have her daughter Leah for debt. She is comely and the Corinthian pimps are always ready to pay a good price for handsome girls; so I shall save enough to pay the Lord's money. Ah! there is Rabbi Isaac at the door now."

Alexander arose to greet his guests, Rabbi Isaac and a tall man whom we recognize at once as Demetrius, the silversmith.

Rabbi Isaac, having cleared his throat, began. "Although the prophet reproved Jehoshaphet for joining affinity with Ahab, yet of him it is said that he turned not aside from following the Lord; so stress of circumstances compels us to accept the aid of the uncircumcised."

"Come, come, old Israelite," broke in his companion, "I love you and your crowd of sniffing Sabbath-keepers as much as you love us. It pays you to help us without so many apologies; for unless you do, the day may come when neither Diana nor Jehovah have a temple to their name."

"Be seated, worthy sirs," said Alexander, "Rachel! Rachel! Rachel! wine for my guests."

When the wine was brought the conversation began. "By Pluto, we have failed again," said Demetrius, "and every failure makes the Christians stronger."

"How is that?" said Alexander.

"You know that some of the soothsayers have been studying the methods of Paul. By appointment the seven sons of your countryman, Sceva, have made a specialty of it. They at last supposed themselves masters of his secrets, and resolved to try their power on a man who is harassed by a demon, and who lives with his mother on the back side of Coressus. Not being certain of a cure, they desired to try their skill in secret, and had arranged with his mother for an opportunity when the fit was

on him. Women can never hold their tongues, and the hag, expecting a great event, invited all her neighbors to the spectacle. Some of them were Christians, who bragged of the certainty of failure before we arrived."

"Alas!" groaned Alexander; "saith not the wise man, 'One man among a thousand, have I found, but a woman among a thousand have I not found!'" "

"The seven sons of Sceva, myself and others, therefore, found the house full at our arrival, and the demon, excited by their presence, unusually fierce and wild. We were somewhat taken aback, but decided not to appear afraid, especially as we knew that an august manner would probably subdue him into quietness for a time. So the eldest of the brothers stepped up to the demoniac, and in a loud voice before them all said, 'I adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth, come out of him!'" "

"Holy Father Abraham! What happened then?" gasped Alexander.

"The man became utterly furious; fire seemed to dart from his eyes, and foam flew from his lips. With a yell, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?' he sprang upon him. Feet, nails, and teeth were his weapons. He seemed to have the strength of ten. Several were knocked down and badly bitten and stamped upon. Not one of us but received bruises and scratches."

"The worst of it is," broke in Rabbi Isaac, "that it gave the Christians more influence. Already the story is all over town, and, as a result, last night,

two new preaching places were opened in that part of the city, which were crowded to the doors."

"The crisis is upon us," answered Demetrius, "and the Christians multiply among all classes. Your own synagogue is depleted, as you yourselves admit; and the crowds that worship Diana are alienated to this Jesus. Slaves and laborers were led away, at first; but now priests and nobles, yes, many of the soothsayers and magicians have followed them. I care not for them personally, but they reveal our secrets and bring us all into contempt."

"Has that slave, called Onesimus, brought you any tidings of their doings?" asked Rabbi Isaac of Alexander.

"The villain was sent with letters to Colosse over a week ago and of course I have not seen him since."

"He may be useful to us yet," said Isaac; "did he bring thee no word before his departure?"

"See these," answered Alexander, drawing the copper seals from his drawer; "that is the seal of Archippus, son of Philemon; this the seal of Nymphas of Laodicea; and this of Epaphras, son of Theron. Onesimus came to say farewell to Rachel and showed her three letters, and she opened them. These seals I made so that the matter might not be discovered, and I am saving them for future use.

"What was in the letters?" exclaimed both hearers at once.

"Nymphas wrote to Philemon, asking for his daughter's hand, but confessing that he had become

a Christian, and as such must receive her or not at all."

"Fool!" muttered Demetrius.

"Archippus wrote to his father, begging him to grant the request, and saying that he himself had become a Christian. He named several prominent men who had been thus deceived, among them Glaukos, the Asiarch."

"I knew he was friendly to the sect," said Demetrius; "and I fear him, for he is rich, powerful, and worst of all, he knows too much."

"Epaphras," continued Alexander, "wrote to his father an elaborate account of the doctrine of the crucified, mentioning the names of prominent Christians, and at last confessed that he and his slave were converted to the faith."

"A pack of fools! a pack of fools!" grunted Isaac, "to go from heathenism to apostasy from Israel, without even a pause within the gates of Zion. Thinkest thou that Philemon will give his daughter to that Nymphas?"

"If he does," replied Demetrius, "so much the more fun. Any boy can catch a maiden, but it takes a man to seduce a married woman. But to return to business: I see our opportunity. Onesimus has brought us valued information and we may use him again. Ye are agreed that Paul must die, are ye not?"

"So saith the law," replied Isaac.

Demetrius continued, "I have no hope of his destruction by legal means, for his friends are too powerful; but since Onesimus is among them, per-

haps the slave may be induced to poison him for us?"

"A good thought," said Isaac, "and a safe one. While he is about it, could he not destroy all his master's set?"

"Unnecessary and too dangerous," answered Demetrius, with a shake of the head. "His master's friends are philosophers who give little to Diana at the best, and no one cares what they think. Paul is the great leader, and when he is removed his disciples can be scattered. Moreover, if several persons were to sicken and die at once, suspicion would be aroused. Onesimus under torture might reveal the truth, and their wealthy friends would make it hard for us."

"He says wisely," said Alexander, "for we must run no risks. The magicians can mix a potent poison, which causes sickness and vomiting some little time afterward. Death follows as if from a sickness of the stomach."

"Call Rachel," said Isaac, "for she is gifted as the wise woman of Takoa, and ask her how we can best make Onesimus do our bidding."

When Rachel stood before them and heard the plot, she said, "It will never work according to the old plan. I am sick of being courted by the slave, and in an unguarded moment, I promised him freedom and marriage on his return."

"You did!" burst out Alexander excitedly. "You, a free daughter of Israel, promised to marry a heathen slave, and told him I would purchase his freedom! The fellow is young and lusty, and might

cost a thousand drachmæ. Who told you to say so?"

"You told me to use my wisdom and I did," answered the girl definitely; "but I realize that we can use him no more without further concessions."

"If love will not answer, cannot we employ force?" suggested Demetrius, with a wicked light in his eye.

"I know not how we could thus hold him," answered Isaac, "but perhaps if Alexander would offer him freedom without his daughter's hand, he might serve for that."

"I could never pay it" gasped Alexander,

"I know how we can make him our slave," exclaimed Rachel. "The fool told me that he was one of those who attacked the lady Apphia and her daughter during the festival of Diana. The pro-consul threatens the culprits with crucifixion, and offers a reward for their discovery. We can compel him to do any service to save himself from the cross."

"A bright thought," exclaimed Demetrius, "and one that I was myself about to suggest. I had a suspicion that he was the assailant. We will act upon it."

"The means of delivery for Israel and of vengeance upon the apostates!" said Isaac.

"The bird is caged," chuckled Alexander; "for he is even at the door."

So it was. Onesimus, having delivered his messages to Archippus, had come at once to the shop of Alexander and was about to enter.

"I must not see him," whispered Rachel, hastily retiring.

Onesimus came boldly in, greeted the strangers, and said to Alexander, "My journey is accomplished, and I have returned to claim your promise. Where is Rachel?"

"Who are you," muttered Alexander, "to ask after the daughter of a son of Abraham?"

"By Hercules! she is mine, for both you and she promised me my freedom and her hand," said Onesimus, somewhat taken aback.

"You lie," retorted Alexander.

"Hark ye, slave," said Demetrius, "tell us who it was that attacked the lady Apphia and her daughter, and for whom the tree of the cross is waiting."

"I know not," stammered Onesimus, turning pale.

"If you know not, we do; and that answers the purpose. You were one of them. Alexander's palm itches this moment for the reward offered for your arrest, but we need you for the present."

"Who told of it?" screamed Onesimus. "Has Rachel deceived me?"

"Your courtship is over," answered Demetrius with a sneer.

"But I was to have freedom and marriage," cried Onesimus, turning angrily towards Alexander.

Again Demetrius interposed, "You still have your choice, slave. Serve us as a spy on the Christians, doing our bidding, or we deliver you up to the pro-consul. Witnesses are cheap now-a-days, and the death on the cross is unpleasant. Choose!"

Onesimus had turned from one to another and found no sympathy, so he burst into tears.

"Choose!" thundered Demetrius, towering between him and the door, "choose!"

"I will serve you," gasped the slave.

"Now give us the letters you brought back from Colosse."

"I brought no letters from Colosse."

"You lie, you dog!" shouted Demetrius, seizing him by the throat. "This is the way to treat slaves." With a brutal leer, he laid Onesimus with great force on the floor.

"There, Isaac, you bind his feet with that cord, and you bind his hands, Alexander, while I hold him down."

"Help! murder! let me up," roared Onesimus.

"Shut your mouth," said Demetrius, giving it a blow, or I will call the city watch, and say we have just captured you. We will have the money and you the cross."

Onesimus muttered curses, but was quiet.

"Now," said his inquisitor, when Onesimus lay on the floor, securely bound, and the door had been shut and fastened, "give us the letters."

"I have no letters," gasped the slave.

"Do not tell us that again or I will teach you to tell the truth."

"By Diana," protested Onesimus, "Philemon and Theron were angry when they received the letters and sent me back without a message."

"Perhaps he speaks the truth," said Isaac.

"We will soon find out," replied Demetrius, striking the flints for lighting a candle.

"Now, slave, I think your back is as good a place to burn as any, you can wear a sore there and no one need know it."

Onesimus struggled, cursed and groaned as the fire was applied to his shoulder. In a second he said, "take the candle away and I will speak the truth."

Demetrius held up the light and he continued; "I had letters from Philemon to Archippus and Nymphas, but by the gods, none from Theron to Epaphras."

"Where are they now?"

"I delivered them to Archippus and then came immediately here."

"Now you speak the truth, slave. What was in the letters?"

"By the mother of the gods I know not."

"Take care," said Demetrius, holding the flame too near the skin for comfort.

"I swear it is so," groaned Onesimus, "but I know how the masters received the word."

"Tell us that," said Isaac.

"Philemon was very quiet about it, and went to consult his wife. I heard her speaking in a loud voice as if angry. I know by the appearance of Archippus and Nymphas the answer was not favorable."

"How did Epaphras' father receive the word?"

"Theron was very angry and swore that he would disinherit his son. He drove me from his door, and gave me no letter."

"I believe your word," said Demetrius, "and because you have been so trusty we will give you more to do.

"Alexander, you watch him, and I will soon return."

True to his word, Demetrius soon came back with a small earthen vial in his hand.

"Now, Onesimus," said he, as he placed the candle, which he had ostentatiously relighted, close to the captive's face, "we have a service for you to perform. Swear by the Styx that you will do it faithfully and secretly."

"What is it?" said Onesimus.

"Swear first," said Demetrius.

"I must know first."

"Take that, stubborn one!" exclaimed his tormentor, thrusting the flame against his shoulder again.

"I swear," groaned Onesimus, struggling in his bonds.

"You have sworn by the Styx, by which the gods dare not swear and break an oath. Now we have determined that Paul must die, and you are to poison him for us."

"I cannot, I cannot. I never prepare his food. How can I do it?"

"Your master dines with him and you can find the way."

"I will not."

"How? slave! will not? Feel this again," as the flame blistered and then ate its way into the flesh.

"Think of the crucifixion just before you. Some-

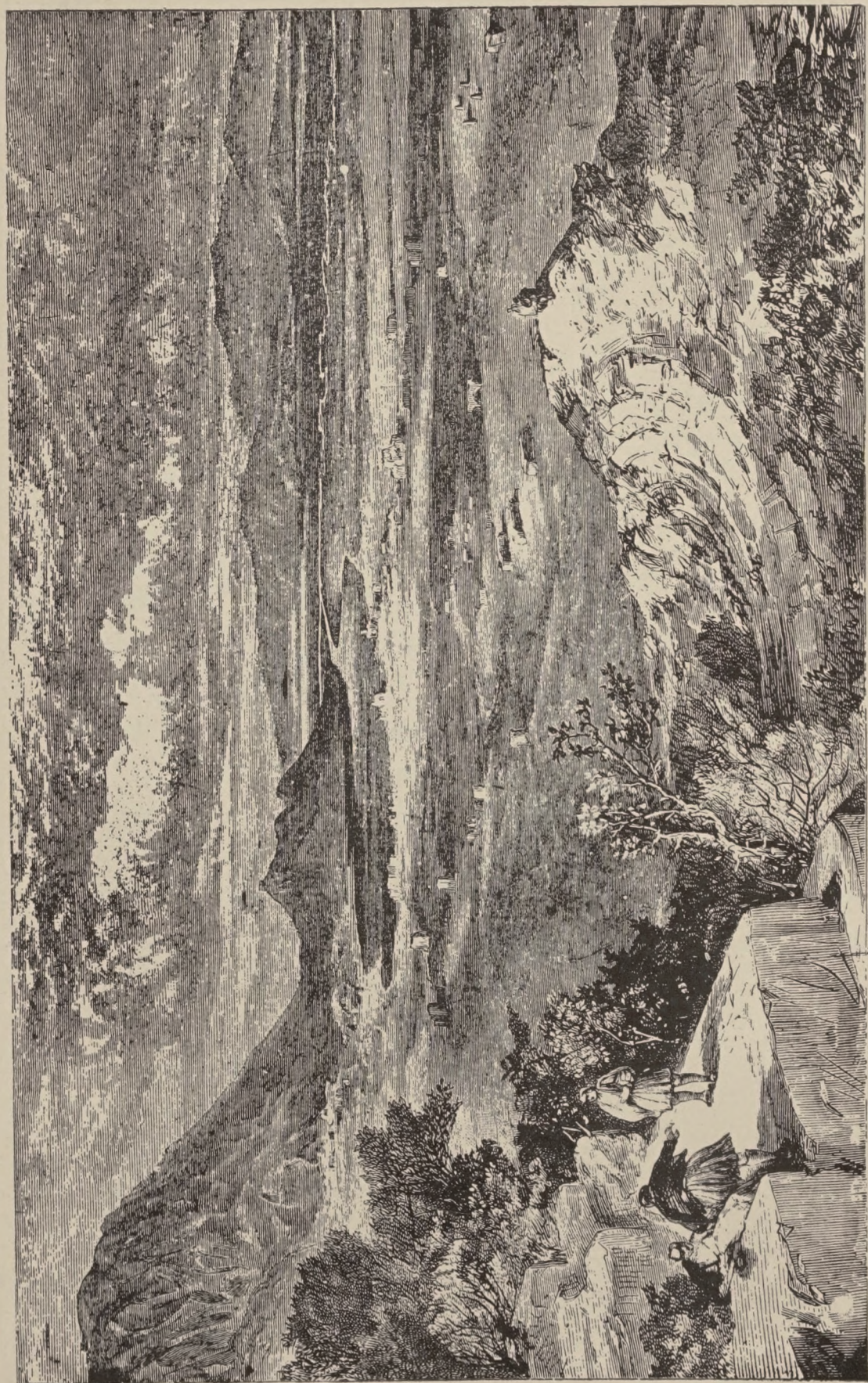
times strong slaves like you live three days on the cross."

"Oh, I will do anything, anything, take away the flame."

"So you promise?" said Demetrius, after a moment of rest.

"Yes," muttered Onesimus.

"Then take this vial and mix its contents with Paul's food. Here is enough to kill ten men, so do not fear for the result. Watch for your opportunity or make it. Only you must do it soon. Do not think you can escape me. My craft will overtake you beyond the Pillars of Hercules, if you try to flee, and the fate that would come to you would be the terror of all disobedient slaves ever after. If you do your work well," said he more mildly, loosening the bands which had cut the wrists of the slave, "our friend Alexander will doubtless treat you handsomely. A thousand drachmæ is a large sum for a slave like you, but perhaps he might pay it and give you the hand of the fair Rachel for your services. But in the meantime take this obolos to buy salve for your burn."



SITE OF EPHEBUS FROM THE EAST

CHAPTER XII

WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!

The climate of Ephesus is delightful. The bleak winds blow cold in winter and hot in summer from the uplands of Asia Minor. But they spend their force on the rugged sides of the Lydian hills which separate the high interior from the lower Ionic coasts. Gentle breezes from the Ægean temper the heat in summer, and modify the severity of winter with the warmth of the Mediterranean. Ephesus occupies that most pleasant of all positions in a temperate latitude, a southern exposure. One may traverse the mighty peninsula from the Euphrates on the east, by the shores of the foggy Euxine, over the tablelands of Cappadocia and Phrygia, or along the southern coast, and find no climate so bracing in winter and so pleasantly cool in summer, as the western coast-plain within which Ephesus is situated.

And yet the city's position had its disadvantages. The Mæander, the Hermus, the lesser Cayster, all bear towards the sea the silt from a vast watershed, so vast that the plain itself is the product of the deposit of ages, and continually encroaches on the sea. The harbors of Miletus and Ephesus have gradually become more and more shallow. At present, the places where the keels of stately ships once floated free are stagnant fens, and a like fate is

preparing for the harbor of Smyrna. Roman Ephesus stood upon the dome of Coressus and the elevation of Prion; mountain spurs, flung westward as it were from the greater mass of Sipylus and Tmolus. But the old Greek town at their base was founded on the mud of the Caystrian meadows, and the temple of Diana stood on marshy ground. Therefore malarial fever claimed many a victim amid the crowded population of the city, especially in the autumn, when the streams were low.

Archippus leaned from the window of the school-room of Tyrannus, a burning sensation in his bones and a throbbing pain in his head, unusual to one of his vigorous constitution. One year had wrought great changes in the young man. He had left his father's home at Colosse a boy of twenty, shedding tears at the parting from his old associates, and yet eager to see and become acquainted with the great world. How rapidly we grow! Years of ordinary life may pass over our heads and leave us much the same as they found us. Suddenly there comes a great failure, or a great success; a great sorrow or a great joy; the necessity of an eternal choice, and the old life is cast off forever and we stand forth for better or for worse, different persons.

So it had been with Archippus; one year had made the boy a man. It was not the study in the school of Tyrannus, valuable as that might be; it was not the broadening influence of a great city, with its freedom from the restraints of home; it was rather the force of a new conception. The center of his soul's orbit had been changed from

self to Christ. Well said the Apostle, in consideration of this truth, "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things have become new." The new manhood had been developed amid sorrow. The displeasure of his father because of his new faith; his mother's intense grief; and the burning tears of Menodora; had all united to surround his Christian joy with clouds. Philemon had written to him coldly and without threats, but in language every word of which cut the young man to the heart. He also sorrowed in sympathy with Nymphas. The latter had quietly read the polite but positive refusal of Philemon to give his daughter to the care of one whose philosophy was not sufficient to keep him from embracing a degraded, eastern superstition. The flower of hope had been torn from his heart as he turned from the joy of a lower love to the obedience of a higher. Epaphras too required sympathy, and even financial assistance. No reply to his letter had come from Theron, but his money allowance had been stopped. The silence was ominous and he knew Epaphras greatly dreaded the storm which must in time burst upon him. Besides all these conditions of change, Archippus found himself in the society of men, whose every thought was a prayer, and whose every deed was an act of heroism. So it was no wonder that the boy Archippus should in one short twelvemonth become a strong man.

There were a small number of persons in the familiar schoolroom of Tyrannus. Luke, Timothy,

Erastus, Aristarchus, Gaius, Aquila and a few others were present. Beside these were Nymphas and Epaphras, with their slaves Manes and Tychicus. Evidently it was not an occasion of public instruction or worship; rather it seemed as if each of the company were engaged in his own devotions. Manes' honest face was intense with study, as he sought to impress by repetition the lesson for the next day's catechetical class upon his mind.

"Shall the Christian therefore consider that he can continue in sin because grace abounds?

"God forbid, for how shall he who is dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

Paul arose from his attitude of prayer, his face looking like that of an angel.

"Brethren," said he, "the tour of the country regions is God's will and shall be greatly blessed. You, my sons, Timothy and Erastus, shall go with me as far as Troas; and when we have fully preached the gospel in the regions beyond, we will return to Ephesus.

"What hath God wrought!" continued he after a pause. "During my short sojourn of a little more than a year in this city, how has the knowledge of the truth increased! What a great change since Apollos taught in the synagogue and the twelve disciples received the Holy Ghost! Now I doubt not that all within the city have at least heard the gospel; and ye are my epistles, written on my heart, known and read of all men."

"Yes," replied Glaukos, "from the slaves on the dock to the priest in the temple, both Jew and Gen-

tile have come to a knowledge of the Christ. I bless God for the day that brought you to us—you and your disciples.”

“There is no power like that of the gospel,” replied Paul, waxing eloquent at the thought, “and the day will come when the temple of Diana will be forgotten, but the temple of God will be established above the tops of the mountains, and all nations shall flow into it. Nowhere have I found a greater door than at Ephesus, and nowhere else are the hosts of Christ and Satan better prepared for battle. Seven churches have already been established in Asia, and the news from most of them is encouraging. It is not my work alone, for God hath given me many fellow laborers who are a comfort unto me. Nor is it our work alone, for it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. And now brethren,” said he, after he had led the little company in a fervent prayer, “‘I commend you to God and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among them who are sanctified.’ You,” said he, turning to Luke, “are to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. Nymphas, Archippus and Epaphras, see that ye witness a good confession in your studies, and improve your time by laboring among the poor as ye have opportunity.” Then followed words of exhortation and comfort, and an outline of work to be done by each, from Glaukos the Asiarch, to Manes the slave.

When a Christian kiss and salutation had been given and received, Paul said, “Brethren, pray for

us, during this journey, that the word of God may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you, and that ye may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith." After he had said these things, followed by Timothy and Erastus he left the chamber.

"I have been thinking," said Nymphas when the door closed, "how mighty is the influence which Christ exerts. He only lived thirty-three years on the earth, and he died a felon's death, yet his power has remade one of the most selfish of men into such a character as that of Paul. His power, Glaukos, has changed your life and mine, in fact the lives of all of us here present."

Luke answered, "In his last interview with his apostles, Jesus said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth.' And we see it is so, for already the kingdom of heaven has grown a great tree and its shadow fills the whole world."

"I never tire of hearing the account of that wonderful life," remarked Glaukos, "and since we have time, will you, brother Luke, tell us something more of the story of Jesus with which you have favored us in times past."

Luke replied, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were ministers and eye-witness of the word, it seems good to me also, having had perfect knowledge of all things from the very first, to write down an account of Christ, which by the encourage-

ment of Paul I hope in time to publish for the edification of the Church."

We are glad to have the privilege of hearing something of it before it is given to the world," answered Glaukos; "do you, if you please, read from it to us."

Luke drew from a case some pieces of papyrus, and said, "Ye know how I read to you a sketch concerning Christ and the children—that touching incident which occurred only a few weeks before his passion, while our Lord was in Perea. It happened that when he had gone forth into the way a certain ruler came to him."

"I have heard the story," interrupted Nymphas, "but let us hear it as you have it written."

Luke read:

"And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery; Do not kill; Do not steal; Do not bear false witness; Honor thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing; sell all that thou hast and distribute to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. And when he heard that, he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich."

While the friends were listening in silence, the door opened and Onesimus entered, followed by a gray-haired man, about whose face played the light of kindled passion. They had entered unobserved and paused near the door, and while they wait we must cast a glance backward.

Onesimus sat on the step before his master's chamber. The mantle which he was mending had fallen from his hands, and great tears of shame and mortification stood in his eyes.

To himself he muttered, "Rachel, Rachel, curse the girl! She led me on by a show of love and a promise of liberty and marriage. It was only to bring me into this snare. The curse of Pluto come upon her, and on her lying old father! All men are liars anyway, and life is a frightful dream."

Here the slave let the garment slide onto the ground and buried his face in his hands.

"Instead of freedom he has made me twice a slave. I am not delivered from my service to Archippus, and I must obey the orders and do the filthy work of all the tribes of Israel, and of the guild of wretches like Demetrius, or be crucified. To obey him is to go deeper and deeper into sin, and to disobey is the way to the cross. I wish I had never been born."

"Is this the chamber of Archippus of Colosse?" said a voice close beside him. "Wake up, slave!" A hard hand shook his shoulder. "By Hercules, you are the slave that brought my son's letter to me. A curse upon thee as a bearer of evil tidings. Does Archippus dwell here?"

"Yes, this is his lodging," answered Onesimus, starting up; "but he is not at home."

"I care not to see him," answered the other, "but I sought Epaphras at his lodgings and was directed here to find him. Can you tell me where he is?"

"Probably they will be found at the school of Tyrannus," replied the slave.

"How so? It is long past the fifth hour when the school is closed."

"I know it, but the Christians assemble there at this time, and I think you will find him among them."

"Pluto take the whole herd of fools!" muttered Theron; for we have by this time recognized the father of Epaphras. "Art thou a Christian slave?"

"No, sir, I still worship the gods of my master's fathers."

"By Hercules, you deserve your freedom for that, but show me the place and this coin is yours."

Onesimus arose, and followed by Theron, was soon within the schoolroom of Tyrannus, where we have already seen them.

Hardly had Luke finished his reading, when Theron strode forward, and seizing Epaphras by the arm, said, "Unworthy son of honest parents, come with me at once from this company of slaves and vagabonds!"

"Father!" cried Epaphras, almost too surprised to speak, "how came you here?"

"How came I here, you dog? did I not make all the long journey from Colosse to Ephesus to deliver you from your crack-brained associates?"

"But, father, they are true and noble men, worthy of all honor. I cannot leave them."

"I sent you hither," continued the older man, unheeding his son's remonstrance, "to learn the wisdom of the world, that my name might be hon-

ored when men should praise the learning of Epaphras, son of Theron."

"I have not dishonored your name, my father; and shall still bring it honor."

"And did I beget a fool," answered the other bitterly, "a fool, to worship a crucified malefactor, dead a generation ago; a fool to consort with slaves and Jews so low that their own synagogue casts them out?"

"Oh, father, you must not speak so," cried Epaphras, excitedly.

"I think," interrupted Glaukos, "that the honored Theron misspeaks. I am an Asiarch, and yet a Christian, noble Colossian."

"You a Christian?" stammered Theron, somewhat abashed. "I supposed that none but slaves, malefactors and addle-headed boys, like Epaphras, were Christians. However, fools are found in high and low places. Come with me immediately, Epaphras, away from this company."

"Father," answered the young man, "I am of age and need not obey you unless I wish. I will follow you in loving reverence to assist you, but if you mean that I must follow you to Colosse, to the old life, that I refuse to do."

"Be careful, young man, how you speak," answered Theron, "I offer you your choice. Choose now and forever. Either you must leave this vile sect and return with me to Colosse, or else you can go out into the world without a father and without an inheritance."

"Oh, no, father," gasped Epaphras, "I shall have

my Father in heaven and the inheritance of the saints in Christ Jesus."

"Choose you!" thundered Theron, his rage increasing, "now and forever!"

Epaphras turned red and hesitated, while his friends stood around in breathless suspense.

At last Luke spoke: "Jesus said, 'There is no man that hath left father or mother or lands for the kingdom of heaven's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.'"

"Silence, knave! Have you not done enough to corrupt a son of a Roman citizen already?" screamed Theron, beside himself with anger.

"Father, I have chosen my Father in heaven and his inheritance," said Epaphras.

"And I shall choose as my son and heir," muttered Theron, "the temple of Diana whose glory ye blaspheme. It is time the proconsul were informed of your wickedness. Come, Tychicus, motioning to the slave, return with me."

Tychicus looked frightened, but Epaphras said, "He is legally mine and he shall remain with me."

"He is yours," answered Theron, "I want no Christian slaves sniffing around my household and corrupting the others. I commend you to your new Father, and wish you joy of your inheritance," turning to the door

"Oh, father," exclaimed the son, springing towards him, "leave me not in anger, but give me your blessing before you go. Give my love to mother, and tell her that I pray daily for her."

"Is this a madman?" muttered Theron, pushing him away. "Never darken my door again." With these words he passed out.

Epaphras threw himself on a seat and sobbed bitterly.

"Well, my brother," said Luke, stroking his head, as a mother might that of her child, "thou hast witnessed a good confession this day, and the promise is thine—'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.' "

"We must provide some means of livelihood for him," said Aquila, who had not spoken before. "My shop has too many hands now, but I think we can crowd in one more man, so that he can earn his bread."

"It is unnecessary," replied Glaukos, in a businesslike way, "I have long admired the youth. He shall fill the place in my home, made vacant when God took my own little son."

"What is the matter with Archippus?" cried Nymphas, springing toward him, for the young man had fainted.

CHAPTER XIII

THIS SICKNESS IS NOT UNTO DEATH, BUT FOR
THE GLORY OF GOD

Archippus was very sick. A year of constant study had taken some of the color from his cheeks and added too brilliant a luster to his eye. The conflict within his spirit between the obedience of Christ and his own pleasure, had destroyed more nerve force than he had appreciated. The grief and worry because of his father's displeasure had preyed upon his mind. So that when the fever, ever at home in the Caystrian lowlands, had approached, it found the door of his constitution open, and it had entered there. Archippus had the fever.

Nymphas had said, as the half-fainting form of his friend was lifted from the litter, "My chamber is larger and more convenient than his; he must be put in my bed."

The beautiful room of Nymphas, so lately devoted to study and elegant leisure, thus became a sick chamber. Manes moved quietly back and forth, shaking his gray head, and silently praying for the recovery of his master's friend. Epaphras and Tychicus came every morning with flowers and fruit and to ask after the patient's health. The chariot of Glaukos stood often before the door, and once and again the dignified form of the sophist

Tyrannus was seen ascending the steps. Nymphas was untiring in his attentions. Even Onesimus, who had grown more dogged of late, watched with anxiety without, and willingly obeyed orders. Upon the couch, drawn into the center of the room, lay the stricken man. He tossed from one side to the other, now calling "Father," "Mother," "Menodora," "Christ," in his delirium; now sunk into a deathlike stupor; and again, weakly thankful during lucid intervals for the kindness of friends.

"The human body contains four humors," said Luke, placing a case of vials upon the table, "blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. When these are in their right proportion the person enjoys health, but when they are wrongly commingled various diseases arise. In a fever such as this the blood, which is the source of heat, has become too thick, and therefore the patient must be bled to reduce the quantity and bring the system to its proper proportion. The qualities of nature are hot and cold, wet and dry; and since like produces like, we must apply cold to him for he is altogether too hot."

Having said this, with a pointed knife he drew blood from Archippus' arm. When it had flowed sufficiently, blankets soaked in cold water were brought in, and Manes and Onesimus packed the patient in them.

"Here is a powder," said Luke, drawing a bottle from the case. "It is made of an herb which grows in the hottest part of the deserts of Arabia. Our gracious Father has provided that where heat is

greatest, there the antidote to heat should be found. The panting herds gladly chew it when overpowered by the sun's rays. Observation of their instinct has led men to the discovery of its virtues; for which we should be thankful. As Jesus went about healing all manner of disease among the people, so we are to follow in his steps. Paul says he is the Ideal Man—the image and type of what humanity is to become. I wish Paul were with us now. God hears his prayers and grants him the power to perform miracles."

"How shall we administer the powder?" interrupted Nymphas.

"The powder is to be boiled in water and allowed to cool. Give the drink to Archippus every time the sand in the glass runs out during the night. Pray also that God will bless the medicine and that this sickness may not be unto death but for the glory of God. I will come again to-morrow. Good-night."

"Nymphas," said Archippus feebly when Luke had departed, "did he say this sickness was unto death and to the glory of God?"

"No, Archippus; he said, 'Pray that it be not unto death but for the glory of God.'"

"It seemed to me," continued the sick man dreamily, "that I stood at the door of heaven. The glory of God filled the place; and Jesus, just as we have so often heard him described, stood at God's right hand. He beckoned me to come to him; but I answered, 'O Lord, I cannot come until my parents and Menodora have been brought to the truth.,

He smiled on me, and said, 'Trust me, Archippus, for I died for them as well as for you.' "

Nymphas shook his head sadly. The dream seemed to harmonize with his own fears for his friend. But he answered cheerily, "A beautiful dream, Archippus; but you must take this drink which Luke, the beloved physician, left for you, and then try to sleep."

"Nymphas," said Archippus after a pause, "I am sick enough to die."

The words startled his friend, but he answered, "You are very sick; but God has need of many such laborers as you, to build in his earthly temple. I trust you may be spared for many years of service yet."

"I think I understand the vision," mused Archippus, to himself. "I must die but my death will bring them to Christ, and you shall marry Menodora, my Nymphas."

Nymphas burst into tears, and, between his sobs, cried, "Oh, Archippus, God grant that they may be brought to Christ and that I may marry Menodora; but his will be done."

"I wish I could see them once again," murmured the other, "and tell them of the love of Christ, but I fear it is not to be."

"There, my young master is not to die!" broke in the faithful Manes, who had entered unobserved. "Who was it but the Lord Jesus who said to the young man at Nain, 'Young man I say unto thee arise'? and did he not abide two days still in the same place where he was, when the sisters sent to

him saying, 'Lord he whom thou lovest is sick'? Was not the sickness to death, and also to the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby, and Lazarus rose again? So, young master; Archippus is not to die, but to live, and declare the works of the Lord. And Master Philemon and his wife and daughter are not to be left out, for Jesus died for them also, and Menodora shall be my master's wife."

"God grant it may be so," softly replied Nymphas, but Archippus made no answer, for he had sunk into the sleep of utter weakness.

"My lord, kneel down here and pray with me," urged Manes, his strong faith making the slave the master at such a crisis; "and then send word to Colosse summoning Philemon. I will journey to Troas and bring Paul back; so it shall be as I said."

"You are a wiser and better Christian than I," said Nymphas, when master and slave had knelt in prayer, made one in him in whom there is neither bond nor free. "I will write a letter to Philemon to-night and dispatch Onesimus with it in the morning. You shall go for Paul, for by God's grace he may have power to raise him up."

"Don't send Onesimus," urged Manes, "for you need one slave with you. Theron I understand is yet in Ephesus, but starts for Colosse to-morrow. He is angry at the Christians but would scarcely refuse to bear such a message as this."

Thus it came to pass that when the sun was sparkling on the marble colonnades of the forum next morning, two travelers crossed its pavement.

The one was a solitary slave, who with hopeful mien and quick step traveled toward the Coressian gate which led toward the north and distant Troas. The other was a merchant, borne by six slaves, upon whose face were the lines of anger and shame.

"Waste no time in leaving this vile town," said he, as the slaves lifted the litter and started on a trot towards the Magnesian gate, through which passed the way to Colosse.

Different was the departure of the messengers. Different was the reception of their message. The home at Colosse was overwhelmed with grief when the sad tidings spread through the house. Archippus had ever been popular in the slave court, and loud were the lamentations there. While their fellows were crying to Apollo or Diana with shrieks and wails, thinking to be heard for their much speaking, some among the slaves prayed in secret to the Father, who heareth in secret. Although the master of the house knew it not, the light of the Gospel was dawning on Colosse. Apphia sat, dry-eyed and stern, holding the letter which her husband had placed in her hand. Writing at midnight beside his friend, whose disease seemed continually to grow worse, Nymphas had expressed himself without hope, and his message had brought despair to the parents' hearts.

"Three days have passed since word was sent," said Philemon, "and Archippus may even now be dead. Alas! my son, so young and brilliant, how cruel is fate to snatch thee from us!"

"By the furies, I swear it!" cried the mother,

springing to her feet, "it is the judgment of Diana upon him for forsaking the gods of his fathers. To the goddess I vow a stag with gilded horns, if she forgives the sin and heals our son. Philemon, we must start for Ephesus this very day."

"Silence, Apphia!" said her husband; "we must wait till morning; for already the sun is setting and traveling by night is dangerous."

"I wonder," resumed Apphia, "what physician they employ. Do they increase the goddess' anger by the use of vile Christian drugs?"

"If Archippus yet lives when we arrive I shall consult the mighty Apollonius himself," answered Philemon.

"Oh, mother, let me go, too," begged Menodora, rising from her seat and throwing herself at her mother's feet with her face hidden in her lap.

"You are too frail, my dear, to endure the fatigue of the rapid journey," replied Apphia, "and you could be of no use."

"Oh, but I may never see Archippus again; my own dear brother, who never did anything wrong until those dreadful Christians led him astray. Besides," murmured she to herself, blushing at the thought, "perhaps I may win Nymphas back to the old faith."

"Let the girl go if she will," said Philemon abruptly, arising to give orders in preparation for the journey.

"Oh, mother, I vow my hair to Diana, if she will cure Archippus," sighed Menodora.

The morning after these events, Paul was praying

upon the housetop of his lodgings in Troas. The view was somber over the dark stone buildings of that ancient town, and the spirits of the apostle were depressed. Just then there was the sound of steps on the stair and Manes appeared on the roof.

"Why, Manes," exclaimed the apostle, springing from his knees, "what has happened? How came you from distant Ephesus?"

"Oh, Master," cried the travel-stained slave, falling at his feet; "lord Archippus is dying and desires your return."

When the story was told, Paul replied, "Archippus is one with our Lord Jesus Christ. He is surrounded with Christian friends to cheer him in his passage to the upper kingdom. Shall I leave my labors just renewed here, to visit one who may be dead already?"

"But Master," cried Manes, "to you the Lord has given power to work miracles; we thought you might cure Archippus."

"God works the miracles, not I," answered the apostle sadly. "Whether it is the Lord's will to raise him up or not I cannot tell. Perhaps he will reveal it to me."

"But come at any rate," urged Manes, taking him by the mantle.

"It is enough," said Paul after a pause; "I believe Christ summons me to Ephesus. We will go at once."

The distance from Colosse to Ephesus is about one hundred and fifty miles, from Troas to Ephesus about one hundred and seventy. Philemon had

provided a horse litter for his wife and daughter; while he himself was mounted on his own steed. Noon of the third day of their journey, therefore, found them moving over the streets of Ephesus; at which time Paul, Manes, Timothy and Erastus, traveling on foot, had hardly crossed the boundary between Mysia and Lydia.

Archippus tossed in delirium on his bed, rapidly sinking towards that unconscious state, which is the portal of death. Luke's skill had proved of little avail. Nymphas was watching the patient and the door by turns, for he knew that Philemon, if he had decided to come, might be expected at any moment.

"Onesimus," said he, turning to the slave who was wringing out clothes for the bath, "go down the street and watch for your master's father."

Hardly had Onesimus opened the door when he caught sight of Alexander the coppersmith, darkly eying the house. It was too late for him to draw back for the Jew had seen him.

"Ah, slave," said he, "how long is the feverish carcass of your Christian master to pollute my building and injure the prospects for new tenants?"

Onesimus made no answer.

"Were it not that Nymphas can pay well I would fling the whole foul nest into the street. But," continued he, "you are a poor spy and of little use in our service. Have you lost the poison that Demetrius gave you for the apostate, cursed be his name?"

"Paul has gone to Troas," stammered Onesimus, "and I cannot give it to him."

"He will be back soon," sneered Alexander; "and then, knave, we expect a quick and neat piece of work from you; or, by the beard of Aaron, the crows will be picking the meat off your lazy bones within a week."

Onesimus turned pale and was about to renew his promises, when Philemon and his company came in sight around the corner.

Archippus recognized no one, but his parents and sister heard with unspeakable grief such words as these: "Oh, Christ, have mercy on father! The ship! The ship! I must carry the gospel to Rome also. Grace and peace to all the saints! The love of God! A sophist? Oh, no, I belong to Christ! Death to the world!"

"The Christians have bewitched him," groaned Apphia; while Philemon turned sternly to Nymphas—"What physician have you employed?"

"Luke, one of our company, and a most skilled physician of Antioch."

"Send him away! send him away!" screamed Apphia in agony. "He has killed my son."

"Let him not come near the room again, and see that all visitors are excluded," said Philemon to Onesimus. "I will see a physician immediately."

At last the new doctor arrived and with great ceremony entered the room. He was a gray-haired man, clad in a dark mantle, and we recognize at once the master of the magicians whom we have seen in the wine-court of Alexander.

"Apollonius has left the city," said Philemon, by way of explanation to his wife; "but this skilled

man is able to do everything possible to save our son."

The stranger spoke: "Although Apollonius is named a god, Æsculapius himself cannot surpass me in the healing art; but is the fee assured for my services?"

"Name your price and heal the boy," cried Philemon shortly.

Thus assured the physician advanced to the couch, felt of Archippus' pulse, examined his mouth and the pupil of his eye.

"It is a case of simple fever much aggravated by sorcery, said he. "Whom have you employed as physician?"

"A fellow named Luke was employed before my arrival," answered Philemon.

"I thought so," replied the other, "a Christian vagabond, one of the greatest knaves in Ephesus. The little skill he has is ever employed for destruction. Let him not cast his evil eye upon the patient again or he will die."

"Oh, what shall we do?" groaned Apphia, wringing her hands.

"I will walk barefoot to Diana's temple," cried Menodora, who had not spoken before, "and dedicate my hair to the goddess."

"You shall do well, child," said the physician. "And now," addressing Philemon, "the sorcery must be expelled before our drugs can touch the fever. It is a slow process, and the fever may destroy the youth before we can reach it. Oh, that you had summoned me before! The gods them-

selves are not able to turn the arm of fate. First, you must purchase prayers this very day in Diana's temple, and post them before every shrine in the city, with offerings of oxen and garlands."

Philemon bowed his head in assent.

"Then you must purchase Ephesian letters in my stall on Mount Prion, which, boiled in water, will make a powerful drug to expel demons. Beside this, half a hundred priestesses must be hired to chant prayers in the temple. When this is done I can reach the fever with my medicines," and with a lofty bow he departed.

"I must obey his instructions at once," exclaimed Philemon, seizing his money girdle, and following the magician into the street.

Apphia bent over her son with that agony of soul which seizes the very wheel of fate only to find its movement irresistible.

"Onesimus," she said sharply, "procure at once a penitent's mantle that Menodora may fulfill her vow."

She had been beautiful on that May morning, when clad in costly silk, she sat radiant with pleasure in the theater, while the words of Nymphas thrilled her soul. Her beauty remained but it was changed as she emerged from her chamber dressed in a mourner's robe. Her cheeks were wet with tears which still would flow from beneath the down-cast lids. Embarrassment and grief had suffused her face with crimson. In spite of his anxiety, Nymphas thought that he had never seen her more charming. The long, golden hair unbound trailed

nearly to the ground. Her only garment was a heavy piece of black sack-cloth. Ungirt it fell from her shoulders to the graceful ankle. The purity of throat, of bare arms and feet, gleamed white as snow against such a background.

Alone she passed from the door upon the street. The corner loungers stared at the vision. They were not unfamiliar with the spectacle of the goddess's devotees, for as long as grief and remorse remain, will humanity endeavor to propitiate unseen powers. They gazed because they had seldom seen one so fair. Through the crowded way she went, safe now from all attack. No ruffian in Ephesus would dare expose himself to Diana's wrath by an act of sacrilege against her worshiper.

The way seemed so long, the autumn wind was so cold, the pavement so hard. She shuddered as she passed the mighty portal which had witnessed the assault upon herself. Beyond the gate, under the stately trees of the avenue, the thought of the time she had walked that path with Nymphas rushed upon her. Her tears for a dying brother were mingled with tears for a lost lover. She had never known how much sorrow there was in the world before.

"It is all the fault of those dreadful Christians," she murmured. "They are killing Archippus, and they have bewitched Nymphas."

At the temple stair she knelt until a priest came to ask her purpose. "I have vowed my hair to Diana for my brother's recovery."

"Where is your money?"

Menodora produced a double stater which her

mother had provided. The priest then led her to the door of the temple, from which she could behold a fire of coals upon a brazen altar, dimly illuminating the stony interior of the shrine. Upon the walls were suspended festoons of gold and silver toys. They were the gifts of those whose vows had brought relief to themselves or friends.

Menodora repeated in low tone, after the official, the appropriate prayers; while he sprinkled her with holy water. Again she advanced until she stood, murmuring her supplications at the altar side. Here the shears, so careless of the beautiful, cut away the locks which had grown since early childhood. A strange fascination held her eye upon the flame which hissed cruelly around her offering, and devoured it with greedy, red tongue. "Withdraw backward from this sacred place," whispered the priest, "and descend the stair kneeling. On every step pause to pray. The omens are propitious, and if your brother be not healed, it will be because you have profaned these sacred mysteries by careless, unworthy thought."

At the foot of the stair, Menodora turned sadly towards home. The weight on her heart felt heavier than before.

As she passed the gate of the temple grounds, within a thick grove, she saw the litter of Nymphas and the young man standing by it.

He approached her with a sad smile on his face and said, "Menodora, the way is long. You are tired and anxious. Get into my litter and be carried home."

"No, never!" cried she, "it would destroy the effect of my vow. Besides, it belongs to a Christian."

"Cannot a Christian do a kindness for you?" asked the youth simply.

"Leave me at once," groaned Menodora, bursting into tears.

"What have I done, my darling, that you will have nothing to do with me? I love you more than aught else in the world."

Still she wept.

"Do you not know that I love you?"—drawing nearer.

The girl looked up and answered, "How can you say you love me more than aught else, when you gave me up for the sake of a crucified malefactor?"

"Oh, Menodora, how shall I make you understand? My duty to the Son of God is superior to every earthly interest."

"So long as you are a Christian," replied she, "my father would never give me to you. He was terribly angry when he heard what you and Archippus had done. Now Diana is also taking vengeance," and the tears began to flow afresh.

The face of Nymphas was working painfully. It was with difficulty that he restrained himself. He drew very near. He took both of the little, bloodless hands in his. She did not draw them away.

"Tell me one thing, Menodora, if your father were willing that you should marry a Christian, would you be willing?" For answer the graceful head rested on his shoulder, and his lips met hers.

"It is growing towards evening," said Nymphas after a pause, the gladness of the first word sinking into a despairing tone as he spoke. "If you will not ride in my litter, it is time that you pass on. God bless you, my dear, for that sign," as the maiden moved away.

The place of meeting was a secluded spot.

Demetrius was fond of secluded spots. He had walked into the grove that he might be alone to plan how he might make the most money from the contract which he had arranged between Alexander and the priests.

Suddenly he paused and peered amid the branches.

The expression of study passed from his face as he muttered to himself, "By Venus! she is again in Ephesus. Clad in a mourner's robe, too, by all the gods! Nymphas is in love with her, and she does not hate him. Ah, ah! Look out, young doves, that the hawk does not find your nest."

Next day Archippus was worse and it was evident that the end was near. Epaphras and Nymphas waited uneasily in the adjoining room, while in the sick chamber the voice of the magician could be heard. "Alas, I fear you have waited too long and the sorcery has gained too strong a hold. Would that you had called me sooner. The blood of a cock, sacred to Æsculapius, mixed with honey, the fruit of the bee sacred to Diana, is often efficacious even in extreme cases. Let it be prepared at once."

Just then the outer door opened and a low cry of

delight broke from the lips of Nymphas. Paul was ascending the stair.

"We came as fast as we could," said Manes, panting from his exercise. "How is Archippus?"

"Dying," answered Nymphas, sadly, "but," turning to Paul, "does God give you power to heal?"

"I have faith in the promise given," returned he; "'They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.' My faith takes hold of that word and Archippus shall live. Lead me to his chamber."

"His parents will object," broke in Onesimus, who stood listening.

"I shall enter, however," said Paul, advancing.

At the door the great Apostle of the Gentiles and the sorcerer stood face to face. It was as if truth and falsehood, righteousness and wickedness, superstition and religion, were gazing at each other. Each recognized the other and the magician spoke first.

"Thou shalt not enter here, O renegade Jew, for thy presence will cast evil upon the whole company."

"Stand aside, thou child of the devil," answered Paul, as he entered the room. Before that mighty personality his enemy felt himself to cringe.

"Thrust him out," he cried in a moment, "Oh, lord Philemon! This is the great leader of the Christians who has brought all this evil on your son."

Philemon realized that the physician of his own choice had failed, and a vague hope entered his mind that Paul might do some good, so he said nothing.

"Your son will need no more herbs but the parsley for his tomb. I will send my bill to-morrow," said the sorcerer in a mocking voice as he hastily left the room.

Paul's presence made him experience a sense of suffocation.

The apostle stood by the bed of the unconscious Archippus lost in prayer. After a few moments spent thus he said calmly and slowly, "Archippus, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole, arise and be healed!"

His word was with such assurance that Apphia, Menodora, and even Philemon were carried by it into the realm of faith.

A flush suffused the young man's features, his eyes opened, he sat up and said, "Why, Mother, how came you here?"

"Your son is healed," said Paul quietly to Philemon. "I will withdraw into the next room."

"Midday, and I in bed!" exclaimed Archippus. "How is that? Oh, I remember now. The fever! But I feel strong and well. Never better in my life!"

With that he sprang from his couch upon the floor, while Apphia and Menodora seized him in their arms.

As the parents feel, who, having seen their child sink in the waters, find him restored to life, so felt father, mother and sister, as they embraced Archippus. Yet mingled with their feeling of joy was a solemn sense of awe almost akin to fear.

The friends and Paul now entered and sat beside

Archippus, while he ravenously ate the food which Onesimus brought on a charger.

"It was the Lord Jesus Christ and not Diana," said Nymphas to Philemon, "who healed your son."

"It is truly marvelous," answered Philemon. "I am determined to put myself under Christian instruction and probe this matter to the bottom."

"The God who has done this shall be my God," said Apphia devoutly.

"To think," cried Menodora, shaking her closely-cut curls, "that I should have lost my locks to that foolish Diana, when Archippus' Christ is the mightier God of the two."

"This may not be the time or place to ask the question," said Nymphas, "but may I speak, most noble Philemon?"

"I know your desire," replied the other with a smile, "Menodora, do you love the noble Nymphas?"

Menodora's blushes were her only but sufficient answer. Philemon continued: "As I, in ignorance, refused her hand to a Christian, so now, in knowledge, I gladly grant her to the noble Nymphas, son of my old friend, and servant to him whom I intend to call Master."

Nymphas clasped Menodora in his arms and a sense of that perfect joy which comes once in almost every life came into their hearts. All wept together, and Paul, the strong man, in broken accents voiced the thought of each, when he said, "Let us give thanks."

Soon after, Onesimus, revealing in his countenance the awful struggle which raged within his breast, was washing the dishes from which Archippus had eaten. Manes appeared in the doorway, a light in his honest face that shone through his tears like the sun through a morning mist. Looking at Onesimus he said, "Did I not say that this sickness was not unto death but for the glory of God?"

CHAPTER XIV

THE SPIDER'S WEB

The chamber which Nymphas had rented of Alexander had a small room upon the flat roof. It was not the usual Aliyah of eastern houses, the large upper chamber such as that in which Jesus met with his disciples on the night before his death. This was a little room entered by a trap door and enclosed with panes of crystal, at that period a luxury enjoyed only by the rich. In this apartment the students had often sat on summer evenings when the heavy dews drove them from the exposure of the roof. But as the cool days of autumn multiplied, the chamber was deserted, except on a sunny midday, for the warmer interior of the house. Abandoned by the others the place was appropriated by Onesimus, whose morose heart made solitude almost a necessity for him.

As we behold him he sits upon a low stool, with a sullen angry eye, looking out over the myriad roofs of the city. In his hand is a crushed piece of papyrus upon which we catch sight of a rude drawing. A cup is sketched, from which a bird, symbol of the departing soul, is escaping; and beside it a cross upon which hangs a human figure, while underneath is written, "This for him at once, or that for you." Hebrew characters and heathen inscriptions rendered the whole drawing of more

ominous import. No stranger who might see the picture would comprehend its meaning, but to Onesimus it was the token that a frightful crisis was upon him.

Human dispositions may be grouped into two great classes. Men are lovers of pleasure, or lovers of freedom. The former class includes all those natures which prefer an easy present to a better future gained through struggle. They are not only the shiftless; but those who yield rather than maintain their rights by force. They are pleasant people and they make few enemies, but they lack the stronger qualities of the martyr. As water assumes the form of the vessel into which it flows, so do they adapt themselves to their surroundings. The latter class is composed of persons of stronger will but less agreeable disposition. As children they are hard to govern; as men they throw themselves into the struggle of ambition and the strife of business. They chafe amid uncongenial surroundings, and either succeed in making their conditions fit them, or are destroyed in the attempt. Of this class are the great reformers and martyrs; the great fanatics and revolutionists of the world. They attain to a higher success or they sink to a lower failure than those of less determined purpose. If one who may be classed as a lover of pleasure be placed in slavery, he makes the best of his lot, and when treated with kindness, becomes content with it. If one who is a lover of freedom be a slave, he struggles with his bonds, be they ever so easy, and becomes an unruly servant, a plotter for liberty and escape. If all his

plans are thwarted he pines away like a freeborn bird within a cage.

Onesimus was by nature a lover of freedom. Cast upon the bosom of a cruel world, he had been rescued from death by one of those villains, the product of the slave system, who make their wealth by speculation in children. By such persons foundlings are taken, not from compassion, but that the boys may be sold in the market as laborers or servants, and the girls for a worse purpose. Onesimus' first recollection was of ill treatment and scanty fare; of the master's whip, and of an old woman who performed the office of mother for him with much the same affection that the incubator has for the newly-hatched chick. Even then he had fretted against the confinements of the nursery pen in which he and his fellow unfortunates had their home. Sold from one to another, he at last, when sick, had been purchased for a mere trifle by Philemon. From that time he had experienced kind treatment. Many a slave would have considered himself fortunate to be in such a situation; but to the young Onesimus the fact of slavery galled his soul like an iron fetter. He was naturally of a bright mind, and his education had not been altogether neglected by his original owners, for intelligence has its market value. Philemon had been careful for his instruction, so that his attainments were considerable.

"He that increases wisdom increases sorrow," says the wise man; and of such a nature, so placed, the word is true. Thus Onesimus became more

morose and ill-tempered as plots to escape floated before his imagination and were condemned by his intelligence as impossible. Of course he had false ideas of freedom, for he mistook license for liberty; a mistake not surprising under the circumstances. It was in a night's debauch that he committed the offense which enabled Paul's enemies to make him their unwilling tool and spy. Thus his false freedom had brought him into a worse bondage. He was angry at Rachel, with the passionate anger of a discarded and deceived lover. The joy of anticipated liberty and of her possession had turned to gall within his heart. He hated Alexander and his companions with all the intensity of his nature; but he feared them yet more. He well understood their power and wickedness. No doubt they could bring him, though innocent, to destruction; and much more when guilty. They had obtained the advantage by the knowledge of his crime; and the fear of the cross was the bit by which they made him the slave of their vile purposes.

Onesimus was not incapable of appreciating moral beauty. He admired the Christians. He greatly respected Paul. Nay, he might even have yielded to the oft-repeated entreaties of Manes and have become a Christian himself, if he had not been detained by the fear of Alexander's wrath. Therefore, although he carried to him information concerning the Christians, and performed the office of spy; it was with an inward revulsion of feeling which made him utterly miserable, and impressed

upon his mind his double bondage. He acknowledged that Archippus was his legal master; a hard thought for such a lover of freedom. He knew that Alexander, Demetrius and Rabbi Isaac were his masters also, and his very soul loathed itself and life.

The message which he had just received had cut his heart like a knife. He had become somewhat used to their talk of the murder of Paul, and had put it off again and again, but now he realized that they would brook delay no longer. A storm of bitter feeling was raging within him. He was tempted to rush to Archippus and tell him the whole, begging his protection. Alas! he well knew that such a course would so excite the enmity of his task-masters that no place in the world would be safe from their vengeance. He pictured to himself another possible course—refusal. He could refuse to perform their bidding. Thoughts of his accusation, arrest, short hearing, torture to compel him to reveal the names of his companions, and then the bitter and shameful death of the cross, floated before his mind. Was there no other way? He might attempt to flee. Impracticable, with the dark eye of Alexander ever upon him. Suicide? He drew back from the idea with a shudder.

A little fly tempted from its winter rest was buzzing against the crystal pane. Suddenly it plunged into a web, and in a moment was the spider's prisoner. Quickly the black body of the jailer darted from its den. The fly struggled hard against its fate but was overcome and became the spider's

prey. The eye of Onesimus had almost unconsciously watched its struggle and he burst into a mocking laugh at its tragic end, a laugh not of pleasure but of cynicism at fate. "By Hercules!" he said, "I am that fly, seeking to gain my freedom through the crystal pane. I have fallen into the spider's web and shall meet the fly's fate."

"Onesimus, Onesimus, come down and help me!"

The cheery call was from Manes; and Onesimus started to his feet, crushing the papyrus into his bosom, and descended the stair.

"I am more busy than usual," exclaimed Manes, as Onesimus appeared at the door of the court, "for your master's father, Epaphras, Paul and Nymphas will dine together at supper and I want to do them honor. The Master said, 'He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward.' Paul is certainly a prophet and we owe him all respect."

A dark cloud seemed to pass over Onesimus' face and his hand trembled on the casement. He forced himself to answer calmly, "What do you want me to do?"

"I am busy with the stew for supper, but do you chop and mix these figs. You can do it as well as I."

Onesimus obeyed mechanically. Was it true then that Diana, whom Demetrius worshiped, or Alexander's God, Jehovah, really favored the plot? If they did, the opportunity for its performance could hardly have been more convenient. And yet the hand, which quickly poured a dark liquid into one

of the dishes, revolted from its task; and the heart of its owner gave a sudden start, when Manes said, "Why do you put the figs in separate dishes? It was ever our custom to serve them together."

"I thought," stammered Onesimus in great embarrassment; "I thought it was more fashionable."

"Well, since it is done, you need not change them, but it never was customary in the household of Nymphas." When Onesimus realized that the poison was in the dish, that Paul was about to take his place at that table where the figs stood, a wave of emotion passed over his soul with such force that it made him sick and dizzy. He detested the crime and those who drove him to it. He feared for the result; and yet a sense of relief came over him that the vile task was done.

"Manes," he said, as he heard the master and his guests enter the door, "I am not well and must have fresh air. Do you wait on the table for I must seek the street."

The wind blew in eddying gusts from Mount Coressus, and he felt chilled and sick at heart. The streets were full of people returning home from their daily toil, or laden with the produce of the market; but in all that crowd there was none to whom he dared to tell his secret. He walked rapidly down one street, which was lighted from the shops at its sides, and into another which was dark. The guilty hate the light.

"Now," he mused, "they are at the table, now Paul is talking of the kingdom of heaven and of salvation by Christ, for he carefully explains these

things whenever Philemon is present. Now, perhaps, he is eating the figs. What a commotion there will be among the Christians when they hear that Paul is dead! Perhaps they will suspect me of the crime. It may bring me to the cross yet. Gods, how cold it is, and how sick I feel! Suppose Paul by his marvelous power knows what I have done and cures himself. May be he will curse me, and his curse would be awful."

Onesimus' teeth chattered, and his knees smote together.

"Diana or Christ—whichever is God, deliver me from my bondage."

A dark figure, unnoticed by Onesimus, now approached him from the shadow.

"Knave, I knew you the moment I saw you, as I returned from the sale of the fair Leah to a Corinthian merchant. By all the prophets, she brought too small a price."

Onesimus sought to escape, but Alexander held him by the mantle. "You received the picture I sent, now act on it."

"I have," faltered Onesimus, "and the poison is given."

It is well that the smile of fiendish exaltation upon the face of Alexander was hidden by the darkness. Some things there are that disgrace the light.

"Ah, ah," he replied—it was his nearest approach to a laugh—"You have? When?"

"To-night, in a dish of figs for supper."

"Ah, ah, there will be a big funeral among the Nazarenes! Ah, ah!"

Then turning to Onesimus, "You have saved your neck, now report to us from time to time all that you can find out of the apostates, and all will be well."

"Am I to have no pay for this?" answered the slave, angered at the manner of the coppersmith.

"Pay! dog, replied the other, spurning him with his foot, "is it not enough pay that the vultures are kept waiting for their meal on your bowels?"

And, chuckling to himself, Alexander seemed rather to glide than to walk away in the darkness.

Onesimus crouched by a wall, and, drawn as by an unseen attraction, was soon in front of the chamber of Nymphas. The door was suddenly opened and in the glare of light from within he beheld Archippus, Paul, Philemon, Nymphas and Epaphras descend the broad stair, and walk rapidly down the street. He followed them until he saw them enter the schoolroom of Tyrannus, where he knew the Christians were assembled. Stealing back he repeated over and over to himself, "It will take effect in the meeting, it will surely take effect in the meeting." Chilled in body, and despairing in soul, he entered the house.

The table in the hall was but partially cleared away and the supper dishes had not been washed. The lamp was flaring on its stand, casting a lurid glare over the apartment. From the bedroom of Nymphas, Onesimus heard the sound of groans, ejaculations and prayers. Hastily entering, he beheld Manes lying upon his master's bed, writhing in agony.

"Why, Manes, what is the matter?" cried Onesimus, a dreadful thought flashing through his mind.

"Oh, the pain, the pain, O Christ, have mercy!" groaned the old man. "I feel as if I were on fire inside."

"Manes, tell me what is the matter," a sudden tenderness coming into the voice of Onesimus as he spoke.

"Why, after you went out," gasped Manes, in the midst of his pangs, "the masters reclined at the table. They were fearful of being late at the love feast, and only ate part of their supper. They asked me to accompany them, but I said I would clear the chamber first and then follow them."

"What did you do then?" urged Onesimus in a frightened voice.

"Then I ate a little supper myself and began to do the work, when the pain attacked me, and I threw myself down here."

"What did you eat?"

"Some stewed mutton and bread, and a dish of figs," gasped Manes, rolling over in his agony.

Onesimus felt tempted to throw himself down by the side of the couch and confess the truth. It had seemed dreadful to him to poison Paul, but that the faithful Manes, the kindest fellow-slave he had ever known, should be poisoned by his hand was too dreadful to realize. With a great sob he exclaimed, "What can I do?"

"I will die," said Manes, weakly, "and Christ will receive my poor old soul. Run to the assembly and

fetch my master and the others, that I may see them before I go."

"I will fetch Paul, he may cure you," answered Onesimus, rushing from the room.

Great was the surprise of the saints when the heathen Onesimus darted into the assembly, and, panting, seized Paul by the mantle in the very act of breaking bread. Onesimus was not in favor with the Christian slaves because of his obduracy to all their entreaties, and horny hands were clinched for the defense of the apostle at the sight.

When the explanation was given, Paul grasped his outer coat, and, followed by the friends, soon entered the door of Nymphas. Everything was as Onesimus had left it half an hour before, but not a sound was heard. Nymphas raised the curtain of the alcove and the others crowded in. Manes lay upon the bed. The look of agony which Onesimus had seen had passed away, and a smile, as of one who beholds something beautiful, was upon his face. Nymphas laid his hand upon his forehead and said in a low voice, "He is dead."

In no respect did the religion of Christ change the opinions and feelings of men more than in regard to death. The heathen dreaded death throughout his whole life, and met it with hopeless submission. Homer's hero would rather be the poorest and most despised of men than to be king of shades. That wealthy patron of learning, Mæcenas, said, that he was content to endure all earthly ills so only life was spared to him. The heathen sorrowed for the departed without hope, wrote a

hopeless epitaph over the remains, and himself died without hope. The heathen slave, having been nothing but a chattel in life, in death was dragged out of the city and buried with the burial of an ass.

He who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, changed all this. The early Christians sorrowed for those who were asleep; but not as others who had no hope. They wrote and spoke cheerfully of the sleeping ones, and approached death not as an end of life, but as a door to life. The Christian slave was a brother in Christ, and shared a brother's love; for Christ broke down the middle wall of partition between master and servant.

So it was in the case of Manes. There was neither indifference nor stony grief by his bier. Nymphas shed tears as for a trusty friend and adviser, while Menodora said artlessly, "Poor Manes! I thought he would be such a good servant in our home, and I am sure he would have taught me how to be a Christian. I lay this branch of cypress on his coffin. It is a sign, not that I sorrow for Manes, who the great apostle says is asleep in Jesus, but as a sign that I am sorry that he has left us."

The heathen rites at the funeral, such as placing a coin between^m the teeth of the departed, and of cakes as provision for the journey, were all omitted; but numerous was the gathering of Christians who listened to Paul's words of comfort. Glaukos was there, for the great man honored the slave as his brother in Christ. Aquila and Priscilla, Timothy,

Erastus, Aristarchus, Luke, and many others of the disciples were present. Onesimus sat by, stony-eyed and silent. He seemed to himself to be smothered under a load of sin and misery.

On the southern slope of Mount Prion, beyond the city wall, was a cemetery, where the better class of trades-people buried their dead. Here it was that almost half a century later the Church of Christ laid to rest the last of the apostles, John the Beloved. In this place Nymphas purchased a grave, cut in the side of a cliff, and thither they bore the body of the faithful Manes early on the morning of the third day.

When the coffin had been put in its niche and a slab of stone placed before it, Nymphas said, "Brethren, ye knew the man who sleeps here—a faithful servant, a tried friend, a true Christian. Write upon the stone: 'MANES, SERVANT OF NYMPHAS OF LAODICEA, FREEDMAN OF JESUS CHRIST. HE SLEEPS IN PEACE. HE WILL AWAKE IN THE MORNING. THE FOURTH YEAR OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTH OLYMPIAD.' "

CHAPTER XV

SO MIGHTILY GREW THE WORD OF GOD, AND
PREVAILED

"This is a great day for Ephesus!"

"How so, O garlic-eating son of Pluto?"

"By Hercules! was it not a great day for Ephesus when the son of Codrus defeated the Amazons?"

"Yes."

"And was it not a great day for Ephesus when Lysimachus gained his power?"

"Yes."

"Was it not another great day for our fathers when the Roman Sulla marched his victorious legions into the Ephesian forum?"

"By Diana! it was; but why do you question me like any sophist his pupil?"

"Is it not a great occasion when Christ succeeds Diana?"

"Now, by all the gods! thou art gone mad; for the maid of Delphi herself cannot equal thee for raving! How has Christ succeeded Diana?"

"Does he not succeed her when all the multitude perform his rites and swear by his name? When priests and soothsayers from the temple confess their sins, burn their books and follow the circumcised Paul more willingly than they ever followed Bacchus? This very day they are to burn their books before the Coressian gate."



COIN OF EPHESUS



COIN OF EPHESUS REPRESENTING TEMPLE OF DIANA



EPHESIAN LETTERS

"Perhaps thou sayest true, O sunburnt son of Neptune; but what difference does it make to thee whether it be Christ or Diana? I presume these Christians buy your fish as well as they used to before they were born of God, as they say."

"By Hercules! yes, and pay for them in honest money better than they ever did before; for which I would vow a fish to this Christ in gratitude, if I could only find his altar. These Christians are a queer set. I hear they are atheists, for they have neither image nor temple. But here comes the shrine-maker, Demetrius, looking as if Charon had just refused him the passage of the Styx. Health to thee, O servant of Diana!"

Demetrius thus addressed, eyed the two bare-legged fishermen disdainfully, and replied, "What health can there be in Ephesus when the Great Diana is despised? Have ye strong arms?"

"By father Neptune, we have. Dost want us to try a tilt with Hercules to-day?"

"No, not now; but such as you may be needed before long to break heads. Hark ye"—in a lower tone—"remain near the forum, and in time of commotion follow any leader of the mob, and it will be to your advantage."

Thus saying, he passed on.

"'Linger around the forum,' says he," said one fisherman to the other. "Tides and schools of fish await not his pleasure. But let's towards the Coresian gate to see the sights."

The crowd was gathering thick and fast, so that already the Sacred Way of Diana was nearly blocked.

"Look, there goes Alexander the coppersmith, not a stingier knave in all Ephesus. He would pick the money from between the teeth of a corpse, and leave the shade to wander forever in misery."

"Sayest thou so, my Manto? Then his daughter Rachel is more free with her charms than her father is with his staters."

"A chip of the old block; for look ye, he would sell his soul to Pluto for gold; and she has just come out as a hetæra, willing to sell herself for gold—her father's child.

"The more fool she, when her father's fortune is reckoned in talents."

"All women are fools, my friend. But here we are in the court before the Coressian gate. Yonder is the sophist's school where the Christians meet. They say they cook the eyes of children for love-potions, and eat their flesh in that chamber. Hercules! what a crowd! Let us mount the wall and view the spectacle."

We will stand with these types of ordinary Ephesians and also look upon the scene, O reader. The gray stone building, upon the third floor of which was the schoolroom of Tyrannus, loomed dark above the city wall, and cut, with grim outline, the fleecy sky of early spring. Every window of that chamber, as well as the windows of the gate tower, with which the schoolroom connected, was full of faces. On the open square before the gate there was a surging mass of people. Each was eager to press beyond his neighbor to obtain a better view of the foot of the stair which led to the apartments

above. We catch a glimpse of a pile of hewn wood and straw, evidently intended for a fire, which three or four stalwart slaves were guarding. On the platform before the door, at the head of the stair, stood Paul, Luke, and several other prominent Christians of Ephesus. On the stair were a number of persons in whom the interest of the crowd seemed to center.

At last one of them, a tall man of commanding presence, motioned with his hand; the crowd became quiet and he said, "Ye men of Ephesus, ye have known me these many years as chief of the college of augurs, and one of the priests of Diana. I confess to you this day with shame, that my methods of reading the secrets of nature and the fortunes of men have been frauds. With lies have I deceived the people of Ephesus and gained my wealth."

At this word, a howl, partly of praise, and partly an ominous sound of wrath, broke from the multitude.

When the noise subsided he continued: "Men of Ephesus, I have turned from vain idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, even Jesus, who lived and died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with him. I have here my roll of Ephesian letters. They are curiously wrought; and many have been the hours I have spent pondering over them, half believing in their power. They are useless things, yea, worse than useless; for by them men are led into error." Thus saying he threw a number of rolls of vellum, beautifully gilded, upon the pile of wood

by his feet. Having done this, he stood with flushed face and uplifted hand before the people. His voice was trembling as he began; but became clear and strong as he spoke. "My fortune, O fellow citizens, is estimated at one hundred and fifty talents. I cannot restore this money to every one who has paid me for my art. The company is innumerable. But I devote it all to the service of Christ in the person of his poor."

Before the murmuring of the crowd could become a roar, another man stepped forward. He was young, clean shaven, and handsome.

"I have been, O Ephesians," he cried in a clear voice, "devoted to study from my youth. To explore the secrets of nature was my purpose. I counted myself a disciple of Euclous of Cyprus. Here are his works which I commit to the flames, for I have found another master who reveals the truth to men, even Jesus of Nazareth."

"It is the witch mother, it is the witch mother of Mount Prion," ran the murmur through the crowd, as an old woman, before unobserved while seated on the lowest step, arose and leaned upon a crooked staff. Her form was bent, her hair was gray, but a bright light shone in her eye. Her voice could only be heard by those nearest to the pile.

"How many of you," she murmured, "have paid me for fortunes? The youths of Ephesus consulted me in affairs of love and honor. For the maidens I have interpreted dreams and prepared potions. Did I believe in my teachings?" she exclaimed, her voice growing shriller. "Yes, I believed in them,

and yet I believed not. But it has passed now, and I know they are the works of the devil. I desire to be at peace with the God of truth, who can save even such as I, through Jesus Christ His Son. O God, forgive my lies, O men of Ephesus, forgive my lies," she cried, seizing an armful of rolls and throwing them on the heap.

"The writings of Antichares and Musæus to the flames!" screamed another, casting several boxes of rolls on the pile.

"I confess Christ by destroying my works on the interpretation of dreams," cried another.

"The works of all the sibyls to the flames, for the glory of God," said a woman, advancing from the group to place her offering in position.

At that moment, one of the men who was acting as guard struck a fire, and soon a cloud of smoke and flame proclaimed the burning of the books. The crowd watched in silence and with breathless interest the blazing heap; while, once and again, more rolls and cases of books were added to the flame.

When the fire was subsiding there were those amid the multitude who sought to raise a tumult against the group upon the stair. One of them addressed our friends, the fishermen, who were still sitting upon the wall.

"How think ye, sons of Neptune; has not the great goddess been disgraced by what we have seen to-day? Is it not time that the strong arms of her votaries were raised in her defense?"

"By Pluto!" ejaculated one of the men, "Strong

arms are good enough, but they hurt not Christians gathered on the third floor of a military tower. Let Diana take care of herself, as I am compelled to do. By Hercules! she never gave me an oblos in my life." Thus saying, he slid down from his seat, and was soon lost in the crowd.

"Men of Ephesus," rang out a clear voice from the top of the stair.

The people gave heed, for it was the renowned Paul who was addressing them.

"Ye have witnessed the burning to-day of the books of enchantment by which in time past ye and their possessors have been deceived. But now the goodness and mercy of the great God have been revealed, not a God made by hands, as ye have thought——"

At this point a shout arose from the outskirts of the assembly, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" It was taken up by multitudes who pressed angrily towards the stair, trampling on and scattering the smoldering embers of the fire. Paul perceived that further speech was useless, and beckoning to his associates he entered the chamber.

The audience which gathered in the schoolroom of Tyrannus had outgrown their quarters, and the door was now opened into the room in the tower, over the gate, which was crowded with people. Altogether there must have been several hundred persons present.

Paul took his stand at the door between the two rooms, and after singing and prayer, he said: "In the name of God let those who have renounced the

world and its lusts, who have been instructed in the Christian faith, and who desire admission into Christ's Church, come forward. Several such responded, but our attention is attracted to a group of three, clad in flowing white robes, a symbol of Christian purity. They were Philemon, Apphia and Menodora. Very fair was she, as the excitement of the occasion blanched her rosy cheeks, and the short curls hung in pretty ringlets around her graceful head. Already nature was restoring to her the gift she gave Diana. Archippus gazed through tears at the group; but the vision of his betrothed was all that Nymphas could see. It seemed to him that heaven was opened, and one of its brightest residents was kneeling before the apostle. There were solemn questions asked, concerning the doctrine of sin and salvation, concerning the purpose of the candidates for their after life. The confession of faith was said, and the whole assembly arose and repeated the creed, the germ of our own creed, and in a truer sense than that of any later document, the Apostle's Creed. Paul arose, and offered a fervent prayer of thanksgiving and supplication for the new converts. He then led each, in turn, to a huge stone jar, from which Luke poured water upon their heads, saying, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen." Paul gave the right hand of fellowship to each; made over each the sign of the cross, and the ceremony was complete.

Epaphras remarked to Archippus as they took their seats, preparatory to partaking of the Lord's

Supper, "I would give my right hand if I could see my parents do as yours have done to-day."

"Be of good cheer, brother Epaphras," answered Archippus, "for God is able to make all grace abound to them also."

Nymphas took his place, opposite Menodora. It was all a wonderful dream, too good to be true. For Christ's sake he had plucked his love from his heart, and Christ had accepted the sacrifice and returned to him the offering. Thus, when Abraham had proved his faith, the blessing came, and Isaac was restored. To Nymphas, the words, which he had heard Luke repeat so often, seemed literally true: "There is no man who has left house, or brother, or sister, or wife, or children, for my sake, but shall receive manifold more in this present life and in the world to come life everlasting."

A hymn had been sung, another prayer offered, and the bread and wine were passed to each in silence; but as each received, he repeated the words—"I present my body, a living sacrifice, to him who was delivered for my offenses and raised again for my justification."

After the Supper was completed, Paul spoke. He talked as a father might address his children. Every word bore the stamp of sincerity and glowed with love. He compared their former state, when they were dead in trespasses and sins, when they walked according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, with their present condition, raised up and made to sit in heavenly

places with Christ. He spoke of the great future of the kingdom of God, on earth and in heaven, and of their glorious share in it.

He referred to those of their number who had fallen asleep; to Manes, whose sudden death had shocked them all. He explained that the great difference between their present and their former state was the work of God, who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he hath loved us. He dwelt upon the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, and its consummation in his passion; and then he explained the duty which they owed to him who had given himself for them.

At this point in his address the apostle began to particularize. He addressed the masters and the slaves in the assembly, speaking to each, of their duties. "Remember," he said, O masters, that ye also have a Master in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him. Forbear threatening; and seek to obey, towards your slaves, the command of the Lord. 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,' for we are all brethren in Christ Jesus. And ye, O servants, care not for your bonds; for he that is called, being a servant, is the Lord's freedman. With good will do your work, not with eye service as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, knowing that whatsoever a man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."

The merchant and man of business were advised of their share in Christ's work. Husbands, wives and children received instruction. Nymphas

thought that while to love one's wife, even as Christ loved the Church, might be a high ideal, it was not impossible, as he beheld the tear-stained face of Menodora, turned in wonder and attention towards the apostle. If he could have read her thoughts, he would have perceived that her vision of Christ, somehow, took the form of himself, while she quietly murmured, "He loves me even as Christ the Church."

Paul had spoken long, and the dusk of evening had filled the chamber with shade. The one light, placed upon the desk, filled the room with strange shadows.

The apostle paused for a moment and then continued: "Brethren, I have remained with you for the space of two years, teaching the Word of God among you. Ye yourselves know that I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. Yea, these hands have ministered to my necessities and to them who were with me. Publicly, and from house to house, I have not ceased to preach repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. The Church of God is founded in your midst, and I am called to preach, not where Christ is named. 'Far hence unto the Gentiles'—was the command to me, when He made me an apostle. I must therefore bid you farewell. Timothy and Erastus have already departed into Macedonia, and by God's grace I hope to follow them. Thence I shall journey into Judea to take alms to my nation and an offering. After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Sobs filled the room at these words, and the elders grasped his hands, in pledge of faithful care for the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers.

When the assembly had dispersed and the silent stars looked down on empty streets, Archippus and Nymphas attended Philemon and his family to their lodgings. On their return they passed the shop of the coppersmith. The blind was closed, but a light shone within.

"Alexander must be keeping late hours," said Nymphas; "he is no friend to us Christians, and I fear he plots some mishcief."

"What can a man, such as he, do of good or ill to so glorious a cause," replied the less experienced Archippus.

If they could have lifted the shutter and gazed within they would have beheld the coppersmith in savage mood. Drafts of exchange and itemized bills were scattered over the counter, while his mantle, hastily thrown off, had slidden to the floor. He had somewhat calmed himself by writing, and at present was calculating upon a waxen tablet laid upon his desk. Between his teeth he muttered the names and amount of the sums before him.

"Three copies of the Ephesian letters, written on vellum and adorned with gilt, at five hundred drachmæ a copy, that is fifteen hundred drachmæ. The works of Euclous of Cyprus in twenty rolls, a very rare work, and worth, I am informed, ten thousand drachmæ. By the beard of Aaron, that smooth-faced student must have money to burn, to

throw into the fire books like those! His conscience would not let him sell them. Ah! ah! Our law forbids the practice of magic also, but I could have easily satisfied my scruples and made a good bargain besides. Then there was the pile of rolls that the old witch mother cast into the fire. She has dabbled in the art for years and made money like water I warrant. The East and West have been her teachers, and those books were of priceless value, the collection of a lifetime. Ten thousand drachmæ would hardly cover their worth. Then there were the works of Antichares and Musæus, preserved in cases. Holy Father Abraham! I am told there is not another set of these works complete in all Asia, and they were ancient too, transcribed in Alexandria during the hundred and fifty-second Olympiad, as was recorded on the cover. The gold alone wrought on the cases was worth a thousand drachmæ. Fifteen thousand drachmæ was their value at least; all, all consumed in smoke."

Here Alexander snatched his scanty locks in his thin fingers and glared at the tablet before him.

"Let me see how much were all these worth, fifteen hundred drachmæ, thirty-five thousand drachmæ, that makes thirty-six thousand five hundred drachmæ, utterly wasted through the influence of that accursed Paul. He seems not to know the difference between an oblos and a talent. Then there were other books, chapters of Ephesian letters, books on omens and dreams, and formulas for raising demons. They were all worth good money, every one of them. Yes, I forgot, there were

copies of the Sibylline books. Alas! fifty thousand drachmæ would hardly cover the cost. Alas! alas! all burnt and wasted, and Diana's images unsold on our hands. Even the money for Jehovah, praised be his name, is hard to collect in the synagogue. Rabbi Isaac says I must increase my gifts."

At the thought, Alexander sprang to his feet and hastily paced the shop, still running his fingers through his hair. "This day is a day of rebuke and blasphemy, for the children are come to the birth and there is not strength to bring forth.—Who is there?" cried he, stopping suddenly as a loud knock was heard at the outer door. Alexander threw the door open and peered into the darkness. The tall figure of Demetrius, the silversmith, loomed large in the gloom as he entered the chamber.

"Well, old Jew," he remarked angrily, as soon as the door was closed behind him, "great success you have made of your attempt to trap the Christian dogs."

Alexander muttered an unintelligible reply.

Demetrius continued: "At first we thought it was a little matter which could best be killed by silence or ridicule. Then we began to be alarmed. I, when I discovered the reason of my decreasing business, and you, when Jewish apostates nearly disrupted your synagogue."

"Well, have we not done our best to oppose the heresy?" whined Alexander, "and still it grows."

"Still it grows!" yelled Demetrius; bringing his fist down upon the counter with such force that the coins in the drawer beneath danced at the blow.

"Still it grows, and by Hercules! we must adopt more energetic measure to destroy it!"

"What can we do?" answered Alexander. "You thought it sufficient to poison Paul, and that was attempted, but that fool slave, Onesimus, only succeeded in killing another slave, and never touched the apostate."

"Onesimus is a worthless rascal," replied Demetrius, "false or inefficient or both; there is no more use of bothering with him. My plan is to raise a tumult among the people and boldly attack the Christians in their assembly. We could promise the plunder to the herd; and we could pay a few of the more desperate ruffians to dispatch the leaders. There are always enough lewd fellows of the baser sort to gather a mob."

Alexander glanced anxiously at the door to be sure it was fastened. The avaricious are ever timid.

"Speak lower, my good Demetrius," murmured he; "it seems that the very walls have ears now-a-days. Do you not think that is dangerous? The mob once excited might attack the honest Jews. My shop stands in an exposed place, and, alas! the multitudes have exaggerated ideas of my wealth."

"Coward!" muttered Demetrius; "if you fear that your shop may be pillaged, deposit all your money in the temple vaults."

"But," persisted the other, "Ephesus is a free city and the Romans are ever jealous of such. If we should be called in question for the uproar we might lose our local autonomy, and then there

would be an increase of taxes. Besides, Paul is a Roman citizen; the number of the Christians is enormous; and many high officials are favorable to them. Even the town clerk speaks well of them; and Glaukos you know is a convert. Be not rash, O Demetrius," moaned Alexander, clutching him by the sleeve.

"Your mother must have been fed on water gruel before your birth," sneered the silversmith. "Nothing ventured, nothing gained, say I. I am determined to adopt the open method. I shall call a meeting of all the crafts of Ephesus and even of the towns beyond. Then we shall make an imposing show of force. Under such auspices the mob can be organized into an army that need only strike once and then can disappear."

Alexander looked undecided, but replied, "What are we going to do about Onesimus?"

"Bah," answered Demetrius, "he is too small a fish for our net, do not trouble with him."

"But the five hundred denarii promised as reward for the assailant of the lady Apphia!"

"Well, old Jew, if it will give you any pleasure to see him suffer, accuse him to the proconsul. It will be several days before our mass meeting can be assembled. Wait till then, for his arrest might cause complications. One week from to-day we shall be ready, and you may act your pleasure."

"I will wait," answered Alexander.

Demetrius shifted his weight from one foot to the other, glanced at the narrow seat and concluded to stand.

"There is another matter," he said, in a low tone, "a little matter of my own business, but its success will greatly trouble the Christians."

His companion muttered approval.

The silversmith continued, "Tell me, Alexander, have you yet in your possession the seal of Nymphas of Colosse?"

The Jew fumbled in his drawer and produced the seal.

"Yes, that is it. A lamb under a pair of shears. The elder Nymphas made his fortune in the wool trade. May I have the use of this seal for a few days?"

Alexander's face assumed a virtuous expression as he replied, "My religion forbids me to allow it to pass from my hands. The uncircumcised might use it for wicked purposes."

"Your religion forbids! Old hypocrite. Come, come, tell me how much you will take for it."

"It cost me much time and labor. It is worth five drachmæ."

"I will give you two drachmæ for it and not an oblos more."

"You are a hard man, Demetrius. If you will swear by Jehovah that it shall not be known, you may have it for two."

"By Jehovah, Pluto, or any god you please, I swear this will get you into no trouble. Here is your money."

Alexander's eyes gleamed as the coin fell into the drawer. Demetrius was turning away.

"One moment more, my Demetrius," said the

Jew, "If you are interested in such matters, I can show you the hand-writing of my lord Nymphas."

The other turned toward the counter on which Alexander placed a piece of crumpled papyrus.

"This is a letter which the impudent youth sent me demanding that I repair the roof of the chambers which he rents from me."

Demetrius examined it carefully.

"I will give you two more drachmæ for it," said he.

"Say four and it's yours."

"Here are three, old miser!" replied the silversmith, throwing down the money and taking up the sheet.

"Farewell, my good Demetrius. What would you do without me?"

"Farewell, old Israelite

CHAPTER XVI

THE UPROAR IN THE THEATER

The kingdom of heaven is that society, whose membership is learning to offer the petition of the Lord's Prayer—"Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." This is the dominion over which Christ rules; the realm of peace and love. This is the great organ by which he works; the means of all true progress for humanity.

Into this kingdom men enter by different ways. One man, in his search for good, finds the pearl of great price, sells all he has and buys it. So Paul, in his search for righteousness, made the discovery on that noonday near Damascus, and from that time those things which were gain to him before he counted to be loss for Christ. So the Asiarch Glaukos, in his pursuit of soul-satisfaction concerning immortality, had found the pearl in Christ and he sold his old honor to obtain it. So Nymphas and Archippus had sought for pearls and the pearl of the kingdom had been found by them. For a time the question had been, whether it was the pearl of great price or not; to Nymphas whether it was worth more to him than Menodora; to Archippus whether it was worth more to him than the path he had marked out for himself. Each at last had seen its value and bought it; for to him who seeks the supreme good the kingdom is discovered as a pearl of great price.

The kingdom is found in another way. One is digging over the field of daily life. He has tested life's experiences and thinks he knows what he may expect. Has he not for many seasons raised crops in that field? but at last, to his great surprise, beneath the spade of his ordinary toil is found the kingdom like treasure hid in a field. Such had been the case with Philemon and Apphia. Life's day was past noon with them, and it seemed that they knew, by experience of the past, what was to be expected in the future. They were not in search of anything, when the healing of their son suddenly led them to the appreciation of a force of which before they had known nothing. Sure of its value, but not aware of its nature, they had sought Christian instruction. At last the beauty and power of the kingdom had burst upon them, and in the waters of baptism they had sold the field of their old life for the new field in which the treasure was hid.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house," so had Paul said to the jailer of Philippi. Thus, in general, it is; for the salvation of the parents means the salvation of their children. Natural, indeed, was it for Menodora to follow her parents into the Church of Christ, and within she discovered, in his worship, the soul-satisfaction vainly sought at the shrine of Diana. Therefore, although by different methods, the father, mother, son and daughter had become disciples of Jesus, and heirs of the kingdom which God had promised to those who love him.

"Oh, mother," cried Menodora, looking up from

Besides this, he knew that Archippus doubted of his right to hold slaves, and therefore he hoped for his freedom. If he could only leave Ephesus, with its dreadful memories, far behind, and begin anew as a free man in a strange place, he might yet be happy. Foolish Onesimus! his idea of freedom was to follow his own depraved tastes and to be in slavery to his appetites. The Christian teaching which he had heard still fell on the wayside, and the fowls of lust, passion and pride came and devoured it up. But this morning he was of more cheerful disposition, and he even hummed to himself scraps of a little love-song which Rachel had taught him in the days when he really believed she loved him.

Suddenly at the corner of a side-street two figures appeared, the one that of a soldier with helmet on his head and a short sword by his side. In his left hand he carried a roll of heavy leathern strap, and beside him walked a round-shouldered, hooded figure, clad in a Jewish cloak.

"There he is now," cried the latter, pointing with bony finger toward Onesimus.

Onesimus had not seen the men till he heard the voice, and before he had time to realize what it meant, the strap was thrown over his head and drawn tight around his neck. He fought and tried to scream, but a vigorous pull by the soldier made him gasp for breath. All struggle was useless, for to resist was to be strangled.

"Are you sure this is the man?" said the soldier, turning toward Alexander.

"Yes," chuckled he, "as sure as I am that I can prove his guilt."

"Come along then," muttered the other, striking Onesimus with the flat of his sword.

"Where will you take me?" ejaculated the frightened slave. A jerk on the throat was the only answer and the three turned toward the forum and the courts of justice.

"What noise is that?" exclaimed the soldier as they approached the theater; for a sound of shouts, yells and screams came from that direction.

Alexander was about to answer when his companion cried, "By all the gods! the forum is full of a furious mob. I must deliver the prisoner and rush to the guardhouse directly. My cohort may be called out to suppress it."

It was even so. From every side-street people poured into the forum. As soon as they entered, they were caught as dead leaves in the eddying pool, and whirled on whether they would or not. Slaves, tradesmen and well-to-do merchants were pushed and pulled amid that great mass of degraded humanity, which in every city appears in the time of commotion, disappearing as soon as the disturbance is under control. And yet the crowd was not altogether without organization, for scattered through it were desperate-looking men who were united in the cry, "To the theater, to the theater!"

"Father Abraham!" exclaimed Alexander, "let us avoid it! I fear my shop is sacked already."

Hardly had he spoken when the multitude surged around him, and the three were carried by force

towards the great stone structure at the south of the forum. An officer of the law and his prisoner are apt to receive slight consideration in such a gathering. In a moment the soldier's sword was gone, sticks and stones fell on his helmet, and he was pressed angrily backward and forward. The mob instinctively perceived in the representative of government an enemy. Shortly after, he gave a pull on the strap which bound Onesimus, and it slipped through his hand. Some one had cut it.

Alexander fared little better. "Down with the Jew! Down with the Jew!" cried one and another near him; pushing him from side to side, and tearing his hood from his mantle. He tried to seize his girdle, which was full of silver pieces, and hold it tightly in his hands. The crush was terrible. To save his chest from pressure he raised his arms. It was only for a moment, but when his hand sought his belt he gasped for breath and moaned, "It is gone; it is gone!"

The crowd was now pouring into the theater through every door, and the seats and aisles were full. Still the multitude thronged in. Two men of Macedonia seemed an especial object of hatred to the leaders, for they dragged them forward as if for popular demonstration against them. The people were diverted, however, by the shouts which rang back and forth and echoed from wall to wall.

"Down with the Christians! Death to all Jews! Ah, ah, worshipers of an ass! Down with the money-lenders and despisers of other nations! A curse on the circumcised!"



VIEW OF THE THEATRE OF EPHEBUS IN ITS PRESENT STATE

For whatever purpose the gathering had been collected, evidently it was rapidly becoming an anti-Jewish meeting.

"This will never do," cried Rabbi Isaac to the disheveled Alexander.

The two men had been pushed by the surging mass to the edge of the proscenium. There they clung to the platform for relief, as two shipwrecked sailors, tossed upon the shore by the raging sea, might cling to a rock.

"We intended to make this a great gathering for the destruction of the apostates; and lo, these ignorant fellows confound our holy nation with the renegades. Speak to them, Alexander, and divert their anger toward the Christians."

"Alexander will address us, Alexander will address us," cried several Jews in the vicinity. Before he knew what was intended, he was lifted to the platform, and the cry had become a roar—

"Alexander to speak! Down with the Christians! Peace to the good Jews!"

Alexander, indeed, presented a sorry spectacle to the multitude as he stood upon the stage, facing the people. His hood, which had formed one piece with his mantle, was torn off and lost. His inner tunic, which was of white, was spotted with dirt and ripped in front. His leathern girdle, passed through loops in his mantle, was still about him, but it had been cut at the buckle and hung open where his purse had been. He was heated and perspiring. Compelled by his co-religionists, he stretched out one long arm and began to attempt a

speech, when a slave on one of the topmost benches shouted, "See the old circumcised despiser of the great Diana!"

It was enough, for the spark had fallen on inflammable material. What cared the rabble for the distinction between Jews and Christians? Was not the great Diana the pride and glory of Ephesus, and did not the Jews refuse to do her honor? Some drunken youths who had forced their way into the seats reserved at festivals for the priestesses of the goddess, raised the shout, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

The word echoed from orchestra to outer wall. Soon Alexander slid down from his position to the place beside Rabbi Isaac, glad enough to escape observation. One great roar sounded and resounded through the theater while the words rang back from Coressus and Prion, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

A mob is ever childish. Just as a growing boy, allowed to use his lungs, is restrained from greater mischief, so the multitude which might have been led to awful violence relieved its feeling by shouting. Therefore when the town-clerk entered by a rear door, and stood upon the stage with beckoning hand, the people became silent. He occupied a high position and was popular with the multitude.

His words fell like oil upon the troubled waters as he said, "Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there of you who knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshiper of the Great Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? Seeing

then that these things cannot be gainsaid, ye ought to be quiet and to do nothing rash. For ye have brought hither these men, who are neither robbers of temples nor yet blasphemers of our goddess. If, therefore, Demetrius and the craftsmen that are with him, have a matter against any man, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them accuse one another. But if ye seek anything about other matters, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. For we are in danger to be called in question concerning this day's riot, there being no cause for it; and, as touching it, we shall not be able to give an account of this concourse."

"And when he had thus spoken he dismissed the assembly."

CHAPTER XVII

THE HAWK AND THE DOVE

However busy the days of the lover may be, he will always find time to visit his mistress.

It seemed to Nymphas that his hours could hold no more.

The pressing cares of his estate had compelled him to cease attendance at the school of Tyrannus.

Vast herds of sheep were feeding on the Phrygian uplands, whose shepherds sent to their master accounts of the season's shearings. Scores of workmen, at his looms in Laodicea, toiled day and night to make the tunics ordered for the Roman legions. In the harbor of Ephesus two ships swung at anchor, carrying his father's pennant. They were loading cargoes of general merchandise for the distant West. Rents were to be collected from many houses in Colosse and Laodicea. His agents in Athens and Corinth sent letters by every ship concerning the growth of his business in Greece.

Nymphas sorely missed the faithful Manes. The mind of the old slave in his later years had become somewhat childish, so that it was his delight to perform for his master the duties of an ordinary attendant. He had not, however, lost his comprehension of the details of the business to which he had devoted his prime. During many student days in Ephesus he had stood between his master and the

vexations of wealth. Not till this shield was removed did the young noble realize how useful he had been.

The agora and the money changers were often visited by Nymphas; but in two other places of the city was his form familiar. At the assembly of the Christians was he to be found; and in the lodgings of Onesiphorus where dwelt Menodora.

Nymphas had just ended a satisfactory interview with one of his factors. His Ephesian affairs were nearly settled, and soon he could return to Laodicea. The life there would not be aimless, for it was to be devoted to the service of God. It would not be lonely, for Menodora was to brighten the stately halls with the light of her presence.

"It is yet early," mused the young man, glancing at the dial before the window. "I shall have time to visit Menodora before other duties press upon me."

As he entered the apartment the maiden was standing before a mirror of polished silver, arranging her new embroidered mantle. His heart bounded when he beheld the graceful form enfolded in the costly robe; and the fair face looking toward him from the shining metal.

"Menodora, my darling."

The girl turned quickly to meet him, her face as rosy as her garment.

"Oh, Nymphas, I was thinking of you just as you spoke."

"What did you think, my Phrygian Lily?"

"I looked at my own image, so small and insig-

nificant, and that made me think how noble and manly you are. You should have lived in the days of Phidias, for he would have made you his model for a god."

"But if I had lived then, I could not have known you, my dear;" drawing her to a seat by the window.

"Yes, that is so. Is not God good to bring us together? I feel happy all the day long."

"God is very good, indeed, my darling. I gave you up for Christ, and he gave me himself and you too."

"I think more of you, Nymphas dear, just because you were so brave. I understand now, but I could not then."

"My Menodora, my affairs are such that I can soon return to Laodicea. Paul, as you know, starts in a few days for Macedonia; and we wish him to marry us before he goes. Will you complete my joy to-morrow night?"

The maiden's eyes dropped as the blood mantled her cheek, but she replied, "Father is willing that it should be at any time, and"—in a whisper—"I am willing too, Nymphas."

"My Treasure! My Pearl!" exclaimed the youth, kissing her forehead. "I am the happiest man in Ephesus. I will go to see Paul immediately about it. Where will I find him?"

"Probably he is in the shop of Aquila, the Jew," replied Menodora.

Aquila, and his wife Priscilla, were great travelers. We meet them first at Corinth, where they

stopped after their banishment from Rome. With them Paul crossed the Ægean to Ephesus. At Ephesus they aided in the planting of the Church. From Ephesus they sent salutations to Corinth when the apostle wrote his first epistle to the Christians in that city. Still at Ephesus they were at the evening of Paul's life; for from his Roman prison he sent greetings to "Priscilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus." Aquila had established himself as a tent-maker in an ordinary dwelling-house. The chambers on one side of the court had been made into a long room by the removal of the interior partitions. This provided ample accommodation for the cutting and piecing of the great rolls of hair-cloth from which the tents were made. There was space in the court for the erection of the completed product of the art; for every tent was tested before it was sold. On the other side were the living apartments of the pious Jew and his capable wife. A loft above furnished a home for the employees. These were mostly Jews whose confession of Christ had cost them their livelihood.

As Nymphas entered, several of the workmen were spreading a piece of cloth upon the floor preparatory to cutting it. Paul and Priscilla were watching them.

"You see, my son Nymphas," remarked the apostle, looking up, "the word of the rabbis is true, 'He that teacheth his son a trade is as he who walls a vineyard.' I thank God that I am not compelled to eat any man's bread for nought."

"Well it is," replied the other, "that in strange

and hostile cities you are so qualified. At first you thus labored at Ephesus. It would, however, have been a disgrace to men like Glaukos and myself, if we had permitted you so to continue. But time presses, and I desire to speak with you a few moments before I go on my way."

The two men withdrew to the entrance and engaged in low conversation. The result of their talk was satisfactory, to judge by their appearance, for Paul smiled and Nymphas seemed happy.

At that moment entered the master of the shop, accompanied by Philemon, Archippus and Epaphras. When the door was closed Aquila said in a tone of suppressed excitement, "Priscilla, see that the rear door is double barred and the shutters fastened."

When this was done, he continued, "There is a large mob gathered in the forum, raging against the Jews and Christians. They have seized Gaius and Aristarchus. I fear it will go hard with them."

"They have been my faithful companions in travel," broke in Paul. "It would be an act of cowardice to forsake them at such a time. I must at once to the theater."

"Not with our consent," replied Nymphas, laying his hand upon the apostle's shoulder. "It is against you that they are incensed. Your life is worth the lives of ten thousand such as we."

The friends turned pale as a loud knocking was heard at the outer gate.

"We are attacked," whispered Epaphras.

Aquila raised his voice and asked roughly, "Who is there?"

"Open the door at once," came the reply, "It is I, Luke, the physician."

The bolt was hastily drawn and Luke entered.

"What news?" was the question which assailed him on every side.

"It seems," he replied, panting for breath, "that Demetrius, the idol maker, assembled the craftsmen in his place of business early this morning. He urged them to make a public attack on Paul."

"I knew he was very angry at me," calmly remarked the apostle.

"He succeeded in exciting their wrath. They led a mob against the schoolroom of Tyrannus, but found him not. Just then they came upon Gaius and Aristarchus whom they seized."

"Alas!" cried Priscilla, "were they roughly handled?"

"I cannot tell. With them as prisoners they rushed to the theater."

"Why that way?" interrupted Paul; "I was not likely to be found there."

"I think," answered Luke, "that there were certain leaders among them, who led them thither in order to harangue them and hold them together. Several bands are hunting for the apostle."

Paul answered, "It is I whom they seek. I am determined to meet them alone. God will do with me what seems good to him. I must not endanger your lives by my presence."

Just then there were voices heard in the street without and hurried steps. Luke looked through

the lattice and beheld more than a dozen men with staves and swords.

"They are looking for you," whispered he.

"I must to the theater," urged the apostle, "both to free you from danger, to help my friends, and to preach the gospel." Before the others could object, the door from the rear court opened, and Tychicus entered. Since Epaphras had been adopted by Glaukos, the slave had also been a member of that household. He quickly handed Paul a tablet, from which the latter read aloud.

From Glaukos to Paul:—Knowing thy courage I fear that it will expose thee to the fury of the mob. Venture not into the theater. My litter is at thy disposal. My house is devoted to thy protection. Come at once.

Paul looked up and asked, "Where is the litter?"

"It stands guarded by slaves at the back door."

"I will go to Glaukos if the brethren will follow me."

Philemon spoke, "Let some of the men accompany the litter for protection. Archippus, you and Epaphras go with him. I must return home to remain with my family during the tumult.

"I will go with you," said Nymphas, addressing Philemon.

The street through which the two men passed was nearly deserted, and soon they stood within the chamber of Apphia.

"I am glad you have come," she said anxiously. "There has been a dreadful noise without. Where is Menodora?"

"Where is Menodora?" exclaimed father and lover at once. "Is she not with you?"

"Why," cried Apphia, turning pale, "she accompanied Nymphas in his litter."

"She went nowhere with me," replied the astonished youth. The mother was ready to faint. She grasped the table to support herself, as she said, "What means this?"

Nymphas seized the tablet. It was written in his own hand and sealed with his seal. He read:

To my Menodora, Greeting: A matter of business calls me this beautiful morning beyond the Coressian gate. I have sent a hired litter for you to accompany me. I shall meet you by the great stadium.—Nymphas.

"By all the gods!" screamed the young man,—he had forgotten that he was a Christian—"I never wrote that."

Philemon's face worked as he threw the tablet down.

"Some villain has stolen the girl. Mark you. He said, 'Hired litter,' because he supposed she would recognize the one of Nymphas."

"Oh, my daughter! my daughter!" sobbed Apphia, burying her face in her hands.

Nymphas drew his dagger, and with staring eyes darted toward the door.

"Hold!" cried Philemon, fiercely, "where are you going?"

"My darling! my darling! To save her!"

"We must think first," answered the father, detaining the young man with his hand. "Apphia, how long since Menodora left?"

"It must be an hour," came the sobbing reply.

"There is time to rescue her," said Philemon in a determined tone. "Nymphas, haste to Glaukos. Call out all his slaves. Send him at once to the proconsul, I will follow directly with my wife. I must give orders to the slaves here."

Nymphas heard not the last words, for his feet were speeding toward the Asiarch's palace. Never was a short half mile so long before.

"Open the gate," he thundered, in a voice that made the porter think the house was attacked.

Paul and his companions had arrived shortly before. They were astonished to behold Nymphas, hatless, and with tunic loosened, rush into the hall. Their eyes read catastrophe in his face. The last hour seemed to have made him years older.

"Menodora—stolen—carried away," he gasped, flinging the tablet into Glaukos' lap.

Archippus seized the letter, while the lover told in short broken sentences his tale.

"Ho, there, you slaves, Philo, Aretus, Chios! my litter instantly. To the proconsul. Arm every man in the house at once." The frightened domestics had never heard their master speak so harshly. By the time that Apphia, moaning and hysterical, was led into the hall, the litter was at the door, and shining steel glittered in every hand.

At this crisis, even as on the sinking ship, Paul rose to the command. His marvelous quiet and self-control, which all knew was not the result of indifference, made him master. "God rules," he said. "Menodora is of more value than many

sparrows; and yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's will. Know ye of any man who might desire to steal the maiden?"

"I always believed," answered Philemon, "that the assault upon her last spring was premeditated. We know that now she is abducted by guile."

"Yes," groaned Nymphas, "some cursed knave has forged my hand and seal. Oh, Menodora! Menodora! my Treasure! In the hands of some ruffian this minute!"

"I will see the proconsul at once. Demand a band of soldiers and return here," cried Glaukos springing into his litter.

"The case is not desperate," continued Paul, examining the forged seal. "Nymphas, who in Ephesus has access to your seal and writing?"

Nymphas calmed himself to think. "Many men in the city could obtain my writing. I know of none who could forge my seal."

"This," said the apostle, scrutinizing the impression, "is the work of some one skilled in the working of metals."

A light flashed over Nymphas' haggard face. "It is Alexander the coppersmith," he cried. "The cursed villain!"

"Let's to his shop," exclaimed Archippus, springing to his feet.

"Hold a moment, brethren, it is well to act only according to a definite plan. I know Alexander to be a covetous and hard man, an enemy of the saints. I do not think he would steal a maiden of his own will. Perhaps he might aid another for money.

Know ye any man in Ephesus who desires the damsel?"

It was Apphia's turn to recollect. With a shudder she clasped her hands, saying, "Demetrius, the image-maker. Philemon, you remember that I told you how he gave the poor child a ring, and how improperly he acted in our apartment."

"It is they, it is they; Alexander and Demetrius!" groaned Nymphas. "My precious dove in the hawk's nest! We must go at once."

A lowly-bowing slave opened the door to admit an armed man. His head was covered with a bronze helmet upon the crest of which waved a horse's tail. He wore the beaver up. His body was clad in a leathern tunic which was strengthened at breast and back with plates of brass. Heavy boots incased his feet and legs. On his left side hung a short sword, suspended by a strap from the right shoulder. A shield hung on his back. He walked directly to Philemon, and saluting, said: "In obedience to orders I and ten of my century report for service to the noble Philemon of Colosse."

"Where is Glaukos?" asked the latter.

"He remained with the proconsul to arrange plans. Already every gate is guarded and a search is to be made of the ships in the harbor."

"Go with us to the shop of Alexander, the coppersmith," cried Nymphas, springing forward.

It was a tumultuous little company that thronged out of the banqueting hall.

"I will pray for you," said Paul, as they departed.

"Right about, face! Forward, march!"

The squad of soldiery passed down the street with that harmony of motion, characteristic of Rome's legions, whether in Britain or upon the banks of the Euphrates.

The dignity of government could not, however, keep pace with the anxiety of love. Far ahead of the company were Nymphas and Archippus, as with drawn swords they burst into the shop of Alexander. The coppersmith had just escaped from the confusion of the theater. Hot and disheveled, he was bemoaning the loss of his girdle. "My staters! Oh, my staters! They were new, just received from—Father Abraham, what is this?"

"Ah! you villain!" roared the half-crazed Nymphas, seizing him by the shoulder, while cold steel flashed before his eyes. "What do you know of Menodora? Who stole her?"

The Jew recoiled from the energy of the attack with such force that he fell backward over the counter.

"Holy Abraham! Help! Murder!"

"Where is Menodora? Where is Menodora?" thundered the young men crowding upon him.

"By all the prophets! I know not. Ye are crazed, most noble Nymphas." Alexander had by this time recognized his assailants.

"By the beard of Aaron!" shivered the old man, huddling into the corner where the chest stood. Philemon, Epaphras and the soldiers were pressing into the shop.

The centurion spoke, "By Pluto, old Jew, tell this honest citizen the truth about his daughter, or the

lictors will scourge the leather from your yellow back."

Philemon then briefly told his story, and Nymphas showed the tablet with the forged seal. A cold perspiration was standing in great drops on Alexander's livid brow.

"By Jehovah! brethren—peace to you—how should I—an honest man—the son of pious parents—how should I—know of such a crime?"

Archippus had passed behind the counter. His eye fell on a seal lying in the half-opened drawer.

"This is it, this is it," he cried, holding it up.

"It is my seal, you knave. How came you by it?" yelled Nymphas, leaping the counter to seize the abject coppersmith by the throat. "Villain! tell me where Menodora is."

"Hold back, young man," gruffly exclaimed the centurion. "The evidence is against you, old Israelite. Soldiers, bind him."

Alexander sank on his chest, a soft mass of terror.

"Peace—good officer, Oh protect me. Keep him away. I will tell all. The knave, Demetrius, was in my shop one day. A letter came from my worthy Nymphas. I was called into the wine-court for a moment. When I returned the rascal had used my tools to copy the seal."

Alexander's teeth were chattering so that he could hardly continue. He paused.

"Go on," cried Nymphas, "we have no time to waste."

"I—I made him give it to me."

"How did he come by my handwriting?"

The beadlike eyes rolled from one to another.

"He must have stolen it," he gasped.

"Perhaps he speaks the truth," said Philemon.

"We must follow this clew at once."

"Guard this old fool," said the officer to one of his men, "so that he does not escape. Forward to the shop of Demetrius." The silversmith's place of business was closed but a desperate-looking man was loitering in the corner. The soldiers were upon him before he had time to escape.

"Ah! Demonax," cried the centurion; "you back in Ephesus? By Hercules! Throw a line for one fish and catch another. The cross has waited you this long time. Bind him, soldiers." The ruffian took his arrest philosophically.

In a moment he said, "Give me twenty-four hours' freedom and I will tell you where the girl ye seek is hidden."

"Tell us for your freedom!" sneered the officer, "hot pinchers will draw it from you."

"Oh!" exclaimed Nymphas in an agonized tone, "there is not a moment to waste. Here, my man, take this purse. Oh! give him his freedom if he will tell, most noble captain."

"Thank the youth for your whole hide, Demonax! I was not ordered to arrest you. Tell the truth and you may go."

Demonax replied doggedly: "I was hired by Demetrius to carry off the damsel. We took her to the chambers of the priestesses in Diana's grove. That is sanctuary. She was locked in the rearmost

chamber. Demetrius has just returned from the theater, and has gone to see his lady love."

"I dare not take my men into the groves," said the centurion to Philemon. "It would be sacrilege."

"But go with us at any rate," urged the anxious father.

"The affair is interesting," laughed the other. "I will see it through. Soldiers guard the prisoner until we know whether he speaks the truth."

Already Archippus and Nymphas were running wildly along the Sacred Way of Diana.

The gardens at the rear of the great temple were comparatively quiet. Art had trained nature into myriad forms of beauty. Amid the sparkling fountains and secluded groves were many marble chambers. These gleamed white through the dark foliage. They were erected for the use of the priestesses. "Every prospect was pleasing and only man was vile." The most remote of all these cottages was elegantly furnished. The chamber was without a window, but the light fell in many tints over the mosaic floor from a colored skylight. The walls were frescoed with the figures of men and women whose rosy flesh seemed almost to pulsate with life. Chairs, tables and couches were of richest workmanship.

Upon the divan lay the form of a young girl, clad in a red mantle. Her face was buried in the cushions. Her golden hair hung in short ringlets about her graceful head. The luxury of her surroundings had not, however, brought her joy, for convulsive

shudders shook her frame. A tall, dark man entered the apartment, noiselessly locking the door behind him. He laid his hand upon the maiden's shoulder. "Menodora, my dove, at last Venus has brought us together." The girl sprang from him with a scream as if his hand were of flame.

"Let me go," she moaned. "My father—Nymphas—will give you anything you wish. Let me go."

"Nay, dove, you understand not the heart of your true lover. I desire not gold. For a year the fire has consumed me here"—pressing his hand to his heart. "You kindled it, and it burns for you."

The girl was gasping as if from suffocation.

"Perhaps you have heard," continued Demetrius, "that I have wronged other maidens. But I intend no harm to you. By Diana! Jehovah! Jesus! whichever you hold most sacred, I swear it. I ask not gold. Nay, I shall give gold to your father. You shall be my queen. Spain and India shall be the servants of your desire."

"Oh, Nymphas! Nymphas!" was the sobbing cry.

"Nymphas will soon find another, my dove. I will heal his sorrow with a golden salve. You will soon forget him." The long arm sought her waist.

"Villain!" screamed Menodora, her eyes flashing fire. "You know not what true love is. I loathe you. I hate you. I despise you. I curse you. A bed with serpents and scorpions is better than your embrace."

She had retreated to the furthest corner of the room.

Demetrius' brow lowered. "Take care, my lady, take care." He was approaching her. "You are mine for the present at least. If you are troublesome the Corinthian merchants will pay a good price for such as you. No one shall know it." There were hurried steps without. A loud rapping at the door. "Menodora! Menodora! are you here?"

The lover's ear caught a faint response.

"We have found her! We have found her!"

The daggers of the young men cut great gashes in the costly cedar panels.

"Both together! Push now!"

The door curved in its casement but opened not. Epaphras had just arrived.

"All together! Push now—hard!"

Well was it that the shoulders had gained strength in the exercise of the gymnasium. With the shriek of tearing wood the door sprang inward from its hinges and crashed upon the floor. Menodora swooned in Nymphas' arms. Demetrius with drawn sword stood behind the table.

"This grove is sanctuary," he growled; "ye shall die for this sacrilege."

"Kill him! kill him on the spot!" cried Nymphas to his companions. His own arms were too full for action. Doubtless Archippus and Epaphras were willing to obey the order, but their foe was a skilled swordsman, protected by chairs and table. Soon Philemon, the centurion, and a group of Diana's priests appeared upon the scene.

"Oh!" cried Demetrius from his retreat, "the worshipers of an ass are profaning the great Diana."

The priests held up their hands in holy horror.

"Cease your fighting," said the centurion, striking the sword from Archippus' hand.

Nymphas gave Menodora to her father.

"As there is justice in heaven I will have the blood of yonder wretch," yelled he, springing toward Demetrius.

"Protect me, worthy officer," whined that personage, as he saw the light in his opponent's eye.

The soldier planted himself before the lover.

"Unarm," he cried, as Nymphas, blinded by fury, attempted to pass him.

"Now then"—throwing the sword which his skillful hand had seized into the corner—"settle this business right here. The damsel is unharmed and ye Christians are worthy of death for sacrilege."

A priest came forward. "Oh, oh, young men, Christians are ye; despisers of the goddess? This will make a pretty story to tell. Ye have given us great opportunity to destroy the sect." Philemon and Epaphras were recovering their self-possession. "Choose ye at once. Take a gift and oath from Demetrius to touch the damsel no more. Go your way and hold your tongues."

"I will have no gift," cried Nymphas, stamping on the floor.

"Choose ye. By Diana! If ye bring this scandal upon us, the story of your profanation of this holy place will so excite the multitudes that the blood of all the Christians in Ephesus will not slake their thirst."

"It would be awful," said Epaphras, "by our act to produce such a result."

The centurion spoke again. "Worthy sirs, I blame you not for your wrath, but the priest's word is true. The story of an attack by Christians, on the groves, would cause such a tumult that all the legions in Asia could not quell it. Take my advice and do as the priest says."

"What is our sacrilege to his," muttered Nymphas, pointing at Demetrius.

Philemon replied, "It would be a dreadful thing to cause slaughter among the brethren and injury to Christ's cause, for the sake of our own revenge. If the cursed knave will swear never to come near the damsel again, we will not seek his punishment."

"By the Styx, I swear it," answered Demetrius in a relieved voice.

"Archippus and Nymphas, do you support Menodora. Thanks for thy kindness, worthy officer. Hand me our swords. We will depart from this vile den at once."

CHAPTER XVIII

PARTING WAYS

The house of Glaukos, the Asiarch, was one of the finest in Ephesus. It stood separate from its fellows upon a handsome lawn, which was enclosed by a stone wall. A portico, supported by black marble columns, and paved with glazed tiles led from the iron gate in the outer wall to the entrance. Near at hand was the porter's chamber; while on the floor a large dog, wrought in Mosaic, seemed ready to bark a welcome to the guest. Within, the visitor found himself in a lofty hall, around which ran a row of pillars, reaching half way to the ceiling, and supporting a second story. From this, windows looked down into the hall below. Between these columns hung heavy scarlet curtains, suspended on rings from gilded rods. At the further end of this apartment, two flights of marble steps, one on either side, ascended to the chambers above. They curved toward each other, meeting at a central platform, whence passages led to the several rooms of this floor. Between and beneath these stairs a view was obtained of an open court beyond. There a fountain played and flowers bloomed.

When one had satisfied his curiosity and admiration with gazing at the polished stone of the walls, the beauty of the tessellated pavement below, and the deep blue of the cedar roof above, he could pass into the inner court. This was open to the sky.

On the right was the banqueting hall, a large room superbly furnished. Its shining walls reflected the light of many a silver candle-stick and golden charger. On the left were the master's private apartments, his bedroom, library, and bath. The women's chambers were above. The rear wall was broken by three low, arched doors. These doubtless led into the kitchen, the servants' quarters, the stable, and the rooms for storage.

In the dusk of the spring evening on the day after the uproar in the theater, many little groups of people were passing toward this palace. They were of various classes to judge by their appearance. Some wore the leathern tunic of slavery, and were stealing an hour from their night's rest. Some were tradesmen, decked in the best that their scanty wardrobe could supply. Horny-handed laborers in coarse camel's-hair jackets, with bare legs and leathern girdles, were passing in the same direction. All, however, were clean and neat in person. Men and women, Jews and Greeks, were approaching the great iron gate of the palace of Glaukos. The porter opened to them without a word. We are not unfamiliar with the members of one of the groups. They were Aquila and Priscilla, Gaius and Aristarchus. Aquila was speaking. "God be thanked, my brethren, that ye escaped so easily from the mob yesterday. I feared you were to seal your testimony with your blood."

One of the others answered, "I thought so also when I perceived that we were surrounded. We were kicked and tossed about somewhat, but not

greatly injured. The mob was not in savage humor. I am persuaded that the greater part knew not why they were come together. There were leaders, however, in the crowd who were appointed to slay Paul. If they could have found him, they certainly would have shed his blood."

"According to his promise, the Lord was his shield upon his right hand," murmured Priscilla.

"Consider how little their wrath has accomplished," replied Aristarchus. "If this tumult had been raised a year ago, Paul would have been compelled to leave his work half done. He was to depart next week at latest, and this special meeting of farewell to-night will merely take the place of the assembly appointed for the Lord's Day."

"His work is done in Ephesus," remarked Aquila; "but we shall sorely miss him after his departure. None can tell what a tower of strength he is until he is removed."

"It is exceedingly kind of Glaukos," said Gaius, "to invite the Church to gather within his house. Many of the poor saints have never seen such a palace before."

"It is the gospel that raises up the poor and brings down the rich," answered Aquila, "I suppose Paul will give his farewell address and arrange for the continuance of the work."

"We will see and hear something more unusual than that to-night," was the quiet remark of his wife.

"What is that?"

"Nymphas and Menodora are to be married this

evening in the presence of us all," replied she. "Poor girl, they had planned a wedding for to-day, but after that fiendish abduction yesterday, they feared she would be too much prostrated. I called on Apphia this noon. The whole family and Nymphas are suffering from the shock of the outrage, but are filled with gratitude for the providential rescue. Menodora was much refreshed this morning. She and Nymphas are so much in love, and so determined that Paul shall marry them, that they would not put it off a day longer. After all, the best cure for their pain is to be in each other's company."

"It was one of the most dastardly crimes ever committed in Ephesus," answered Gaius, clinching his fists. "To think that it must go unpunished because committed within the groves of Diana!"

"God rules," said Aquila; "he has said, 'Vengeance belongeth to me, I will repay, saith the Lord.'"

Priscilla continued, "The family of Philemon are also distressed over the disappearance of their slave, Onesimus. Before the uproar, yesterday, Apphia sent him with a purse of money to the shop of Polemo, the merchant. During their anxiety for Menodora the fellow was not missed, but since he had not returned this morning, they instituted a search for him. Inquiry at the merchant's place of business revealed the fact that he had not reached his destination. So both slave and money are gone."

"He was always dogged and perverse," replied

her husband. "No doubt he has run away. But here we are at the gate."

An hour later there were gathered in the banqueting hall of the Asiarch, in which he had first confessed Christ, a large company. Paul reclined next to the host, and beyond him were arranged by the table, Epaphras, adopted son of Glaukos, Luke, Trophimus, Demas, Aquila, Philemon, Archippus, Nymphas, Gaius and Aristarchus. Below the divan sat a number, perhaps two hundred, of the most faithful Christians in Ephesus. Among them we recognize Apphia, Menodora, Priscilla and Tychicus.

A feeling of subdued thankfulness pervaded the company, for the uproar against Paul had come to nothing, and Menodora had been saved from ruin. The apostle was delivered from the mouth of the lion, and a lamb of the Good Shepherd had been saved from the teeth of the wolf. Tears were in many eyes as their faithful pastor commended them, with choked voice, to the grace of God on whom they had believed. The Lord's Supper was celebrated; and, afterward, Paul announced his plan of work for the seven Churches which were in Asia.

"The galley lies in the harbor," said he, "which by the grace of God shall bear me to Troas, whence I shall journey into Macedonia. Luke, the beloved physician and Trophimus shall accompany me."

Then turning to Epaphras, he said, "Brother Epaphras, Tychicus is already the Lord's freedman, and one of those who is a help unto me. May he make the journey into Macedonia and Greece as my helper?"

Tychicus flushed at this compliment from the great apostle, and Epaphras bowed his head reverently as he replied, "Tychicus is no longer a slave but a brother beloved. When the Lord, through his apostle, calls him, how shall I say nay?"

"And now, brethren," continued Paul, "the churches of Asia are in need of faithful laborers, that as we are removed, the sons may take our places. The elders have decided to ordain Archippus, son of Philemon, and Epaphras, adopted son of Glaukos, to the gospel ministry. God has qualified them with intellectual power and the more glorious gifts of his Spirit. They are no longer novices, but full-grown men in the faith, having witnessed a good confession."

"Amen, amen," was the murmur through the assembly, as Archippus and Epaphras knelt before the group of elders, who surrounded Paul. The apostle prayed long and fervently while the hands of the Church rested upon their heads.

Before this ceremony occurred, Nymphas had stepped down and taken his place beside his bride elect. Both were pale from suffering, but the light of love was in their eyes, as they gazed each into the face of the other.

When the hush which followed the ordination prayer was broken, Nymphas arose, and leading Menodora before the apostle, he said, "You had promised, O Father, that to-night you would unite us in marriage. Yesterday I feared this happy hour was not to be; but now we all thank God for his wonderful mercy."

The young man stood, erect and tall. Tears were in his eyes, but a smile of joy was upon his lip.

Menodora was clad in a snow-white chiton, embroidered with gold. Over it was draped a rich purple mantle. A golden fillet, studded with jewels, adorned her head.

Her eyes sought the floor, and then the face of her lover; while the flush which had not been seen since yesterday stole again to her cheek.

The heathen were accustomed to celebrate their weddings with coarse frolic and drunken mirth. To the Christian, marriage was almost a sacrament; to be honored as a type of the mystical union between Christ and his Church.

When the sober words and prayer were ended, and the kiss of congratulation bestowed, the bridegroom said, "Brethren, it is customary for so happy and thankful a man as myself to give presents to his friends. As ye know, the events of the last two days have prevented me from obtaining gifts of silver or gold. But to the Church of Christ my wife and I pledge our residence at Laodicea. In our house the saints may assemble from week to week; and from our home, thus blessed by their presence, God grant that many a stream may flow to make glad the city of our God. Epaphras of Colosse I desire as bishop, for I know and honor the man as a true servant of Christ. I pledge my wealth for his support while he labors there in the Lord."

A murmur of pleasure, and approval passed through the congregation, and then Philemon arose to speak. "What shall we render unto the

Lord for the multitude of his mercies. He has brought my whole family to the knowledge of the truth. He has honored my son by appointing him to the ministry of the grace of God. He has given us this crowning mercy in the deliverance of yesterday. My wife and I are too old for active service; but in commemoration of all his benefits, we give our house at Colosse for the use of the Church of Christ. There, God's people may assemble from week to week, and, as my door shall ever swing inward for their entrance, so my purse shall ever open outward for their needs."

Paul smiled with serene joy as he answered, "In the days of your ignorance, you were not aware that my son in the faith, Timothy, preached the gospel in your streets, and that God gave him converts among your own slaves. Now I appoint another son of mine, both yours and mine, for he is my son in the faith and yours by nature, Archippus, to be bishop of Colosse."

"And so, after the uproar was ceased, Paul called to him the disciples and embraced them and departed to go into Macedonia."

By dawn of the next day there was much stir upon the docks of Ephesus. A graceful galley lay at her moorings receiving the last few boxes and bales of merchandise directed to Troas, for that was her port of destination. She was long and low, with a grace of outline which proclaimed her intended rather for speed than capacity. Fifty openings along her shining side revealed the fact that her chief dependence was upon her oars. The neck

and head of a gigantic swan curved upward from the sharp prow high above the deck. Her stern was adorned with carving, and was brilliant with paint. One tall mast stood amidships from which was swung a mighty yard bearing a purple sail.

A number of passengers were already on her deck, walking fore and aft, or lounging by the rail. A company of people were gathered on the dock evidently awaiting some one. The ship's captain strode up and down the dock, and at last turned to them with the question, "The sun is high. It is time to start. Expect ye any more passengers?"

As he spoke two large covered litters, borne by slaves, appeared. The curtains were lifted and four men stepped out. We recognize Paul, Tychicus, Trophimus and Luke. There were hurried words of farewell. The cable was cast off. At the signal from the master of the rowers, the oars fell into the water. There was a cheer from the people on the dock, answered by those on the vessel's deck, as she moved out of the harbor into the canal toward the sea.

Next to the berth where the galley lay, was a large Egyptian corn ship, which had arrived the day before, five days out from Alexandria. She was now delivering a small part of her cargo, directed to Ephesus, preparatory to resailing for Rome.

Before dawn that morning the peasants, bringing in their produce from the north, saw, but hardly noticed, a dark figure steal from amidst the foliage of Diana's Grove toward the Coressian gate of Ephesus. The gate was not yet open and the man

skulked along the outer wall until he came to the basin of the harbor. He had on a new suit, such as was worn by freedmen; his girdle was full of money, and he kept his face concealed in his hood, although the morning was warm. It was full day by the time he reached the dock, but he boldly crossed the pavement toward the galley. When he saw the group awaiting Paul, however, he halted with a start, turned quickly and concealed himself among the goods of a warehouse. From his retreat he watched every movement of the people on the dock until the galley sailed. When she was gone, and the last straggler had retired, he emerged from his hiding-place, and accosted the captain of the Egyptian corn ship, who was leaning over the bulwark.

“When does your ship sail, O son of Neptune?”

The captain eyed the stranger suspiciously, and for answer asked, “What business of yours is it? You look like a slave, seeking to run away from his master.”

The man colored, but answered boldly, “No slave am I, although I once was one. I am a freedman, able to pay my fare.” With this he drew from his girdle a purse and displayed the contents to the captain’s eye.

Completely mollified by the sight of gold, the master answered, “We trust ourselves to Neptune’s favor as soon as we have unloaded a few bales of papyrus for the scribes of Ephesus. By the mercy of the gods, our passengers shall land at Ostium in less than three weeks.”

"Here is your pay," said Onesimus, putting the coins into the hardened palm. "Give me, if possible, a private cabin for the voyage."

"By the mother of the gods," muttered the sailor as he led the traveler below, "he must be some rich knave who finds the climate of Ephesus too warm for him. He should be content to sleep on the soft side of a bench, with myself and a multitude of better men;" then turning, he remarked, "This, sir, is the cabin occupied by the noble Felix, when he came out in our poor company to his province in Syria. Since that time it has only been opened to worthy men."

"It is well," replied the other in a more lordly manner. "Even on the sea I must be lodged as a man."

That evening the sun sank in purple and gold beneath the dark waves of the *Ægean*, and from the deck of the merchantman, the passenger looked back toward the isle of Samos, fast disappearing in the east; looked forward toward the great west over the wildly tossing waters, and with a laugh which was almost a groan, he said, "I am free at last."

CHAPTER XIX

EASTERN FILTH IN ROMAN SPRINGS

“In Tiberim defluxit Orontes”—the Orontes flowed into the Tiber. So said the satirist Juvenal, referring to the multitude of influences which poured from the Levant into Italy during the days of the Roman Empire. This figure of speech embodies a remarkable truth, for Rome, having conquered the East by force of arms, became in turn the captive of eastern luxury, thought and superstition. Rome, seated upon her seven hills, looked with covetous eyes towards the lands of the sunrise. Greece, Asia, Syria and Egypt, all were overrun by Roman legions, and made the subjects of Roman tyranny. But, alas for Rome! she was strong enough to gather their wealth, but not strong enough to keep out their poverty.

The eastern world was indeed poor. Her intellectual speculations during millenniums had resulted only in barren abstractions, that resembled the truth as the image resembles the deity. These were borne to Rome and became the play of the upper classes, who amused their fancy, or excused their sin, by means of the philosophies of Athens or the mysteries of Alexandria. The eastern world was indeed poor, for superstition and vice had grown in her fertile soil until more useful plants were well-nigh choked. And these were borne to Rome and

as they took root there the vigor of the ancient Republic gave place to the lazy debauchery of the Empire. The upright character of the fathers disappeared amid the vileness of the rabble. The conquering West was overrun by the conquered East. There appeared a vast army of adventurers in philosophy, religion, business and crime, from the Oriental prince, whose train brought moral and physical corruption with it as he bowed before the throne of the Cæsars, to the Oriental juggler who recaptured by his tricks the money that Rome had extorted from his native province.

Well said the poet, "Into the Tiber the Orontes flowed." And yet Antioch, the Beautiful, stood upon the banks of the Orontes, a place forever famous in the history of the Church; for the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch. It was a place forever famous in the history of missions, for thence it was that Barnabas and Saul started on their journey, recommended by the brethren to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. So, while the Orontes flowed into the Tiber, turgid with all the corruptions, moral, intellectual, and physical, of the East; she also bore upon her bosom the seeds of that Kingdom which was destined to revolutionize the world.

At the time of which we write both influences were increasing in strength. It was the late summer of the year of our Lord 61, more than four years after Paul had left Ephesus; and we find him a prisoner in Rome.

It was late in the evening, but a crowd of people

were lingering upon the Pons Janiculensis, the bridge over which passed the Via Aurelia. The crowded insulæ or tenement houses of the trans-Tiber district were too sultry in August for comfortable sleeping. The poverty-stricken multitudes gathered about the bridge, gasping for a breath of cool air which was wafted up the river.

Over the bridge passed a woman, walking not aimlessly as the others moved, but with the energy, in spite of her years, of one who has to meet an appointment. She was old and hideous. Her thin white hair fell in coarse strings down her back. Her hooked nose and grinning toothless mouth gave her countenance a repulsive expression. Her face, of the color of ancient parchment, was not only deeply furrowed by time, but by the lines of sin; while her dark eyes, like beads, gleamed bright and small from amid a mass of wrinkles. She was clad in a coarse black mantle, wrapped about her shriveled form, leaving both arms bare. Upon her back hung a leathern bag, and a staff was in her hand. Her feet were bare, and callous by sixty years' contact with the pavement.

Moving with an energy not expected in one so time-worn, she threaded the dark and crooked streets, which occupied the plain at the base of Mount Janiculum, ascended the hill, and passed along the road into the country. The evening breeze had freshened and was driving the clouds in scudding banks across the sky. A faint light in the east showed where the moon would soon rise.

The beldam left the highway and plunged into a

field full of broken stones and uneven mounds. Something loomed up beside her path, dark and large. It looked in the dim light like a short tree, with two projecting branches about eight feet from the ground. The old woman gazed at it attentively. At that moment the moon rose. A ray of light touched the top of the object and shimmered down to its foot. It was revealed in all its horror.

Earth is the place for the dead. She is like a mother who hides from public scorn the disgrace of her children, and buries their disfigurement in her bosom. Nay, she even makes the corruption to become sweet and beautiful. The light is cruel to the dead. It brings out in all its manifold hideousness the face of death, and notes with the impartiality of a cold judge, all the shame of dissolution. So the moonlight seemed out of place as it shone on the cross with its dark burden.

The blood had long ceased to flow from the torn hands and feet of the dead man. The skin of the naked body was livid in the white light, livid with that peculiar tinge which marks the beginning of putrefaction. The head had fallen on the left arm, and wore an expression of diabolical amusement with its twisted mouth, from which the tongue protruded, and its staring, open eyes.

The hag approached the cross and two lean dogs, which had been licking the feet of the crucified, ran away. Taking a hammer and short iron bar from her bag, she endeavored to draw the nails from the feet. It was hard work for her feeble arm, but at last they yielded and she dropped them on the

ground. She then passed into the shadow behind and attempted to climb to the crosspiece above. This was about eight feet high and the task was difficult. But her naked feet and hands clung to the wood and soon her form appeared weird and spectral, astride the cross-tree and the arm of the dead. At last the nail in the right hand was pulled. The arm fell, and the body, suspended only by the left hand, slid forward, whirled around, and hung a moment. Then the nail tearing through the flesh, the corpse tumbled in a heap at the foot of the cross.

The old woman's hair and face gleamed white in the light. Raising her countenance with a look of horrid satisfaction, she dropped to the ground. Seizing the body by the feet she drew it for a short distance to straighten it, and then crouched like some wild beast beside its prey.

Certainly our sympathy has been aroused at this uncanny spectacle. We have said to ourselves, "Poor woman, how dreadful that she has lived to see a dear one, perhaps a son, suffer such a death! How dreadful that she has been compelled to come by night to steal his body from the hand of tyranny!" But as we gaze, the moon flashes upon the keen blade of a knife, drawn from her bag. "She will slay herself by the body of her son," we murmur.

Pressing her finger along the clammy naked side of the dead man, she first inserted the knife, and then plunged her hand like some ghoul, into the cavity of the abdomen.

At that moment two dark skulking figures were

seen creeping in the shadow of some piles of rock. There was a faint sound, "Hist! Hist!" The fiend started, drew her hand, dripping from its task, and replied with a low whistle. Two or three more calls, evidently prearranged, were exchanged, and the dark figures emerged from the shadow.

They were men, their faces completely hidden in their cloaks. The woman had by this time drawn some of the internal organs from the body and placed them in a bottle which she took from her bag. She was wiping the knife upon the hair of the dead man.

"What seek ye of me to-night?" she said in a low voice as the men came near.

"We knew we would find you by the Putrid Pits when there was a fresh body on the cross," answered one.

"Yes," replied the hag, "I must not lose opportunities. The newly dead are not as easily obtained as they should be. But I have enough now, liver, kidneys and spleen. I shall burn them to-night, when I get home. The ashes will make a powerful love potion, for which the mistresses of the palace will pay well. Ah! ah!" she chuckled, "the liver of a dead man, properly prepared, will hold a fickle lover better than all the paint which Octavia uses to make herself beautiful in the eyes of her royal husband."

"You make money, mother of the furies," said one of the men. "We came here badly in need of it. We want to ask you to set us some new task, protected by your spells."

The woman arose from the earth and gazed at the moon in thought. As she stood there she seemed like nothing human, rather like some foul demon with its victim at its feet.

"Yes, I know how you can make money," answered she slowly.

"Then tell us, by Pluto," urged her companions, "for our purses have been empty these three days!"

"The lady Julia has some fine new jewels. They were given her by the young lord Claudius who is enamored of her beauty. They would fetch a large sum in any market. She showed them to me when I attended her. Ah! ah! she was glad enough when the danger was passed. She wants no crying voice to drive away her lovers."

"How can we get them?" asked the thief. "By Jupiter! I must have liquour, I have not a coin in my pocket."

"The task would be dangerous without my help," answered the witch, "for each article is engraved. That fool Claudius thinks he will ever love one mistress, but he is young yet. Julia was sorry to read on each piece, 'From Claudius to Julia.' She knows more of such things than he, and it will injure their value. To-morrow I shall visit her again to sell some of this potion," tapping the bag in which the human organs had been placed. "I can get an impression of the key of the closet door. You can enter by the roof, having passed along from the court of Tithonius' wine-shop. Julia rides out every morning with Claudius, and you will only

find one slave in charge. Kill him, or bribe him, whichever is most convenient."

"We will kill him," muttered one of the men brutally, "dead men tell no tales."

"But how are we to cover our tracks," interrupted the other.

"Coward! Listen to me," continued the hag. "I will show you the way. The jewels are engraved and therefore hard to sell and dangerous to keep. Know you that freedman Onesimus, who lives in a cellar of the house of Tertius in the Suburra?"

"The man who sells cakes to the people along the Vicus Tuscus?"

"The very same. He is unknown and friendless. We can bury the treasure in his oven. I shall discover the thief to the fair Julia by means of my divining rod, having previously obtained the promise of a good reward if successful. What will be the result? She," said the witch, her toothless mouth opening with a horrid grin, "will recover her jewels. I shall gain a great reputation for my skill. We three will divide the reward, and Onesimus will bear the blame."

"By Pluto!" exclaimed the taller of the thieves, "when shall we undertake the robbery?"

"To-morrow morning," replied the hag, "I send out the children to beg along the Carinæ and the Via Sacra. I shall walk that way to see how they do their work. The younger brats are ever careless. Julia and Claudius ride out almost daily. Lurk ye by the temple of Castor, and when I whistle thrice, ye may know that they are gone."

"Good," muttered the other, "but where shall we find the breakfast to give us strength for the task?"

"Take this, spendthrift," answered the woman, handing him a small coin which he eagerly seized.

The two men then slouched away behind the crest of the hill. The old woman shouldered her bag and departed, muttering to herself. The moon shone high in the heaven and flooded the field with light. The empty cross stood white and bare amid the scene of desolation. The only living objects were two gaunt dogs which had run away when the woman appeared, but which now returned and growled and fought over a white thing at the foot of the cross.

The events which have just been described occurred on the ninth day before the Kalends of September, A. D. 61. It was on the seventh, in the afternoon, that is, two days later, that a man whom we have often seen before turned into the street which led between the Viminal and Quirinal hills. On this street Julius Cæsar once resided, but a century of city changes had rendered the aristocratic Suburra a noisy place of ill repute, occupied by the lowest classes of the people.

Four years make a difference in the face and figure of a young man, but we have no trouble in recognizing him whom last we beheld on the deck of the western bound corn ship, Onesimus, the runaway slave of Philemon. Freedom had not produced the most happy results, if we might judge from his appearance. His clothes were poorer, his form less nourished than in the days when he waited

on Archippus in Ephesus. Neither had he found the joys of freedom as sweet as he had anticipated, to judge by his countenance, which was downcast and melancholy. He kept his eyes on the pavement, and doggedly pushed a two-wheeled cart before him, on which were some piles of broken cakes. At last he stood before the gate of a large and rambling structure. Filth clung to the stuccoed walls, while from numerous windows leaned women and children, gasping for a breath of the sultry air. Within the court the heat was suffocating, and the atmosphere was loaded with unpleasant odors. Half a dozen naked children were playing in a pool of filthy water in the center of the enclosure.

Onesimus crossed to the further side and attempted to open a door which evidently led into the cellar. To his surprise the lock came off in his hand and the door pushed back.

"Some cursed boy has broken it," he muttered as he descended the stair.

It was but a few feet below the pavement, but the air was damp and chilly. The room was small, not over six feet by ten, lighted only by the door. The floor was of earth and the only furniture consisted of a bench, two stools and a large box. A pile of straw showed where the inmate slept. On one side was a small brick oven, and above it was a cupboard, containing a few cooking utensils and a bag of meal.

Onesimus threw himself on the bench dejectedly, and buried his face in his hand.

"Toil all day long," he murmured, "and not

enough cakes sold to pay for the meal I baked. Cakes one day old are too stale to sell," he added, looking at the dried fragments on his cart.

Just then the figure of a large, coarse man appeared in the doorway. Onesimus looked up angrily.

"I came for my money and I intend to have it," growled a rough voice. "Your rent is two months behind now."

"By Hercules! you will have to wait a little longer," answered Onesimus, not rising from his seat. "I have hardly a copper to my name."

The landlord looked around the room as if to discover some property which he might appropriate for debt, but failed to find it.

"Come, pay me, or by all the gods, I will throw your carcass out of my house this very night!"

"The night may be rainy and I am very tired; let me wait till morning," urged Onesimus. "I promise you to pay in full in a few days."

The other made no reply, for he espied the sack of meal in the cupboard. Having examined it, he coolly picked it up and turned toward the door. "Here!" cried Onesimus, springing to his feet, "that meal I must have to make cakes to sell, or I can never pay."

Hardly had he finished the sentence when three men appeared at the entrance. One was a member of the city guard, and two were stalwart slaves, armed with stout sticks. A crowd of gaping children followed after.

"Is this the lodging of Onesimus, the cake-seller?"

"Yes," replied the landlord, rather timidly, for he liked not the insignia of authority, "this is he. I have ordered him to leave my house, having just discovered him to be a thief and a rascal."

The officer's hand fell heavily on Onesimus' shoulder, and in a moment he was bound.

"Now then"—to the slaves—"search the oven."

The oven door was thrown open, and the ashes of the morning fire were still seen upon the floor.

"The witch said to gather up the ashes, raise the bricks, and the lost jewels would be found," said one of the slaves, as he scooped up the ashes in his hand.

The bricks of the oven floor were removed, some earth taken out, and a strong metal box discovered.

"Here it is, here it is!" cried both of the slaves excitedly.

"The witch has learned at the school of Apollo, as sure as I am a guard of the city," said the officer, stooping to look at the box.

"What is it?" said Onesimus, starting up to see.

It was the first time he had spoken since he had sullenly submitted to arrest.

"Perhaps he does not know what the box contains," said the soldier sarcastically as he turned the key.

Within were disclosed a pair of golden bracelets, studded with precious stones, a heavy necklace of pearls with a gold plate in front, several golden pins and clasps also richly studded. He picked up the bracelet and read on it the words, "From Claudius to Julia."

"By Jupiter!" gasped Onesimus, "I never knew the box was there. It must have been hidden there in my absence."

The officer closed the box and locked it. Taking it under his arm, he motioned to the slaves to follow him with the prisoner, and turned toward the door.

"Sir," cried Onesimus, shivering with astonishment and fear, "I swear by all the gods, I knew nothing of that box till you opened it."

"Stop your lying, and come along," replied the other, as he regained the open court.

"By Hercules!" ejaculated the landlord, as the group disappeared through the gate, "if I had known he was a thief I would have made him divide up or sweat for it."

CHAPTER XX

THE FREEDMAN TURNED SLAVE

The day was near its close when the officer and his prisoner turned from the crowded Suburra into the forum, and were accosted by Claudius, who had been lounging in the Comitium.

"So you have him," he said, eagerly, as the group approached.

"Did you find the jewels?"

For answer the officer placed the casket in his hands.

"By Hermes, the old witch must be the sibyl herself. And this is the knave who stole them? Is he free or slave?"

"He appears to be a free Greek," answered one of the slaves.

"I would have enjoyed the sport of the capture," mused the effete Claudius, "but the day was so warm, and the herd in the Suburra so stinking. Gods! this very box smells from having been in their company! Guard, put him in prison for the night, and to-morrow I will appear against him. Follow me, slaves." The young man turned away.

Onesimus had allowed himself to be led thus far as if in a dream, but the mention of prison and trial brought him back to the present. Of his innocence he was sure, and yet he realized that the evidence

was against him. In vain he tried to think of some explanation of the finding of the casket, or of some method of escape.

"What is your name?" a hard voice said. He glanced up to see a muscular man, clad like a butcher prepared for slaughter, glaring at him from behind a desk. He had followed his guard almost unconsciously up a flight of steps, the Scalæ Gemoniæ, and was in the jailer's booth, before the door of that prison which later generations have named the Mamertine.

"Onesimus," he faltered.

"Free or slave?"

"Free," answered Onesimus.

"His accusers and accusation, guard?" said the officer.

"The noble Caius Claudius accuses him of the theft of a case of jewels from his mistress Julia," replied the soldier.

The jailer wrote the answers on a numbered tablet, and clasped on Onesimus' bound wrist an iron ring with the number XXVII cut upon it.

"Take this," said he, drawing a piece of barley bread from a pile of loaves beneath his desk.

Onesimus seized it gladly, for he was very hungry, and fell rather than stepped through the iron gate into the yawning blackness of the prison. The door slammed behind him. It was very dark. When his eyes became accustomed to the shadow he found himself in a large room, perhaps twenty-five feet square, arched with stone. The little light and air of the apartment struggled through the

roof. As soon as the jailer had disappeared he heard hoarse voices from the further side.

"By Castor, a new bird, and a crumb in his beak too!"

Three or four forms, emerging from the shadow, sprang toward him. They seized his bread, devouring it before he had time to resist. They were unkempt, shaggy forms; half naked, and more brutal than human.

"Give him a ride, give him a ride!" was the cry as other figures approached.

In vain Onesimus struggled, when a dozen pairs of filthy hands were clasped about him. He was soon entirely stripped, and tossed from one to the other, until he fell bruised and fainting on the floor.

When he recovered himself one of his tormentors said to him, "Here is your tunic, my man. Now you have had your turn. When the next bird arrives you can have some fun with him."

Onesimus crept away to the wall and huddled upon a heap of rotten straw.

By this time it was entirely dark and the only signs of life in the prison were curses and groans. From beneath his feet he seemed to hear sighs and moans. It was the wail of the condemned in the lower prison. Feverish wakefulness sat upon his eyelids. He was glad indeed to see the first faint ray of light stream through the opening above, even though he supposed it was the dawning of his death day.

"After all," thought he, "what matters it? Life is worse than death. A slave at Colosse, I longed

for freedom. A night of freedom at Ephesus made me twice a slave, and I committed murder for fear of that cursed Jew. Four years of stolen liberty in Rome have brought me nothing but poverty, weariness, hunger and thirst. Death! I might better die now; and yet, what is death? Is it as the Christians used to say, or is it the end of all? I wish I were a Christian, as good old Manes was whom I poisoned. There are Christians also in Rome. But it is too late now."

At that moment the prison door was flung open and a glare of light streamed in. Two attendants entered, bearing a basket of bread and a bucket of water. The prisoners each ate his share, greedily, none interfering with the other, for the guards were present. Some chunks of bread were then thrown through the hole into the vault below, and the breakfast was over.

After a time the jailer entered with several officers. In his hand he held a waxen tablet from which he read off numbers.

"Fifteen!"

The soldier found "Fifteen" by the iron ring on his wrist and marched him to one side.

"Twenty - two, Twenty - three, Twenty - five, Twenty - six, Twenty - seven!"

Onesimus came forward and delivered himself to be bound.

"Where will they take us?" he asked of Twenty-six, who was next to him, and upon whom he recognized some of the garments he had lost the evening before.

"The prefect and accusers are ready for our cases," replied the fellow.

It was a sorry-looking company, bound together by a stout rope, that descended the stairs under the leadership of the jailer. Some were dressed in fantastic garb, and some were hardly dressed at all. Onesimus had only saved one garment, and that scarcely reached to his knees.

Across the forum they passed toward the Basilica Julia. It was a long, marble structure, surrounded by columns which glittered in the morning light. Within were rows of pillars supporting the roof. There was a raised platform at one end with seats before it and upon it. Near the middle of the building a marble balustrade ran across, which divided the place of the court from the spectator's division. The prefect sat in his easy chair upon the platform, chatting with two or three advocates. Soldiers walked back and forth through the aisles, and a group of accusers and court-officials were seated in front of the tribunal. A few spectators lounged in the rear, but the hall was not crowded as on the occasion of great trials.

When the prisoners were arranged in their places, the jailer handed his tablets to the prefect, who glanced carelessly over them.

"Number Fifteen, Quintius Larius," said he, reading the first name.

The guard made haste to unfasten No. XV from his fellows and to present him before the court.

"Quintius Larius," continued the judge, reading mechanically from the tablet, "accused of attack

upon the noble Titus Martius upon the Via Appia accused by the said Titus Martius. Is the accuser present?" raising his eyes.

Titus Martius, his head bandaged from wounds, arose, assisted by two attendants.

"Your story," said the prefect.

It was a tedious tale of assault with intent to rob, and it was corroborated by his companions. When he had finished, the prefect turned to the prisoner, "What is your defense?"

"Oh, my lord!" exclaimed the man trembling, "It is all a mistake. I did not attack the noble Titus. At the time named, I was drunk in the wine-shop of Tithonius. Send to him, my lord. He will swear that I was in his shop at that time."

An officer dispatched to find the wine-seller soon returned to report that he was not at home, and could not be found.

"Oh, most noble prefect," begged the prisoner, "wait a little until he returns, for it cannot be long."

"Is your prison crowded?" said the judge, turning towards the jailer. "Can you accommodate this man a little longer?"

"We are too full now," replied that dignitary with a leer; "only last night two men died in the lower dungeon for lack of air."

"Robbing has been very frequent of late," mused the prefect, rubbing his nose with his stylus; it must have been some one who attacked Titus Martius. We know of no other than Quintius Larius who did it; therefore he must be guilty. His death



THE HALL OF JUSTICE

will be a good example anyway. Guards, remove the person of Quintius Larius, prisoner; scourge him, carry him out to the Putrid Pits, and crucify him. Let it be done with speed."

"But, O most merciful judge!" screamed the prisoner, falling on his knees, "have mercy, oh, have mercy! By all the gods, I swear I never attacked the noble Martius. Oh, have mercy, mercy! Most noble——" At this point a sack thrown over the prisoner's head reduced his cries to an unintelligible wail as the soldiers dragged him away.

"Number Twenty-seven, Onesimus, Greek," said the prefect, looking at the tablet.

Onesimus stood before the tribunal.

"Onesimus is accused of entering the house of the Lady Julia, on the Via Labicana, stunning one of her slaves with a blow, and then of robbing the lady's closet of jewels worth twenty-five sester tia. Are the accusers ready with their witnesses?"

Claudius arose, supporting on his arm the fair Julia. Behind him stood two slaves and the former landlord of Onesimus. When questioned, in an unusually affable manner by the prefect, the lady, with many assumed blushes, told of her jewels, which had been given her by the noble Claudius.

"Pardon me," interrupted the prefect, "may I see the jewels?"

An attendant handed the casket to him and he examined them with the eye of a connoisseur. Then he leaned back in his chair and said, "Proceed."

"On the morning of the seventh day before the

Kalends of September," continued Julia, "I rode along the Via Sacra with my Claudius. When I returned, my slaves met me at the door with the word that my apartments had been entered, my faithful servant knocked down, and my jewels stolen. It was even as they said. I found my property scattered about the room and my case of jewels gone. While distracted with grief for my loss, the witch Candidia was admitted. She brought me some powders which I had ordered. She was greatly distressed at the event, and suggested that she could discover the thief by enchantment. I offered her a rich reward and she fell into a trance. In that state she told me that the thief's name was Onesimus, that he dwelt in a cellar belonging to the lodging of one Tertius, in the Suburra. 'Even now,' she exclaimed in her vision, 'I see the thief burying the jewels in the floor of his oven.' So much she said. I informed my Claudius of her statements. He sent to investigate and the jewels were returned to me."

Claudius guaranteed the truthfulness of his slaves as they told of the search and discovery. The landlord was then called upon to testify. He was evidently confused and ill at ease in his position.

"If it please my lord," he began, "I am an honest tradesman, who, by thrift, have obtained the lodging-house mentioned, in the Suburra, from which I derive a scanty profit."

"Tell not of yourself," thundered the prefect. His affability toward the lady was changed to brutality toward the man.

"Do you know the prisoner?"

"Juno preserve me!" whined the witness, "I have that misfortune."

"Tell your story and be brief."

"He came to my lodging-house about a year ago, and said he peddled cakes through the city. I knew nothing of the man, for it is my place to rent my rooms to whoever can pay, is it not, my lord judge? Well, as I was saying, I was becoming suspicious of his evil ways, and had gone to his room to order him away. A good servant of the emperor's like myself cannot endure to have thieves upon his premises. Just then men arrived to search the oven, and made the discovery as they told you."

The prefect then turned to Onesimus. "Wretch, hear what these witness against you? What is your reply?"

A light had begun to dawn upon Onesimus' confused mind, while the lady Julia was testifying. He now answered with energy.

"It is all a conspiracy to fasten guilt on me. The hag Candidia was angry at me when I resisted her cruelty to one of the beggar-children whom she employs. She herself must have stolen the jewels and hidden them in my oven in order to cast suspicion on me."

"Slander!" shrieked the lady Julia, in whom superstitious reverence was strong.

The judge looked at the prisoner for a moment critically, and then said, "Enough, we do not need to hear your story further."

Then arising, in order to display to better advantage the shades of his toga, he continued, "The crime is *furtum manifestum*, according to the best authorities; for to be discovered in the possession of stolen property is held to be the same as to be discovered in the act of theft. For a freeman, as this rascal seems to be, the punishment is scourging, and the person of the thief is *addictus* to the accusers. Let it be so in this case."

The attendants immediately dragged the sullen, but unresisting Onesimus toward a low stone pillar situated a little to one side of the enclosure. The idlers on the *sedes populi* stood upon the benches to obtain a better view; for nothing so delighted the Roman rabble as the sight of blood. Quickly his only garment was pulled from him, and he himself was thrown over the pillar with his hands tied to a ring in the floor. Not a sound escaped his lips when the lash began to fall, cutting the air with great hissing sounds as it rained upon his naked back. The spectators set up a shout of pleasure at the sight of the first drops of blood. The prefect stretched himself and walked across the platform, remarking to an advocate that he hoped it would be a pleasant day for the chariot-race to-morrow. Claudius leaned toward Julia, whispering something in her ear which seemed both to please and displease her, for she struck him laughingly with her fan. At last the prefect raised his hand and the blows ceased. Onesimus was lifted from the pillar, his garment cast about him, and he walked dizzily toward the nearest seat and sat down.

"You may take the prisoner and withdraw," said the judge to Claudius.

The young man replied, "The fair Julia does not care for the thievish slave. She has been greatly inconvenienced by the necessity of appearance against him. Can he not be sold at once that she may receive some compensation for the trouble and grief he has caused her?"

"Let it be as she wishes," was the answer. Raising his voice the prefect cried, "A slave for sale, about thirty years of age. Who will bid?" The mob surged around the naked form of Onesimus who was placed upon a bench for inspection. They pinched the muscles of his legs and arms; they examined his teeth and gloated over the wounds upon his back, but they offered no price, for themselves were mostly penniless. At last a thick-set, broad-shouldered man, with a bald head, stepped up, and having carefully noted his points, said, "My lord Claudius, I have contracted to furnish one hundred gladiators for the coming exhibition. I will give you five sester tia for the fellow. He is the stuff to make a gladiator, for I noticed that he bore his beating without a groan."

"Agreed," answered the young noble, and they passed in front of the recorder's table to complete the purchase.

The money was paid, the receipt and order of slavery from the prefect given in exchange. Onesimus still stood upon the bench. The stout man pushed his way through the crowd, threw the blood-stained mantle about the slave, and seized the short

rope which was still fastened to his wrists. Claudius and his mistress had already departed. The voice of the prefect was heard again, "Number Twenty-two, Sextus Varius, accused of defacing the porticoes of the house of the noble Metellus."

"Come along, now," said the stout man, jerking the rope by which he held Onesimus, "Step lively."

Onesimus was again a slave.

CHAPTER XXI

OLD FACES AMID NEW SCENES

The phenomena of astronomy are universally present before the eyes of men, and their influence is universally impressed upon their hearts. Savages and wise men are controlled in their actions and habits by the ceaseless return of day and night, and the ever-recurring change of seasons. The child of nature and the philosopher stand together dumb beneath the glittering dome. "They are gods!" murmurs the one as he falls in worship before the host of heaven. "Two things fill me with awe," says the other, "the starry heavens above my head, and the moral law within my heart."

Nothing seems more typical of gloom and death to the untutored mind, than the approach of hoary winter, with its ever lengthening night. Nothing seems more pregnant with promise than the approach of spring with its ever-lengthening day.

The winter solstice has therefore been a time of joy and festivity among many peoples. The sun has sunk to his lowest place, and thence he begins to return with strength. From the ancient inhabitants of Latium, Rome derived the festival of the Saturnalia; a feast in honor of the sun's return. It was a period of license, of boisterous mirth and unrestrained hilarity. Therefore one should not be surprised to find the streets of Rome filled with a

noisy crowd of slaves and freedmen, as he elbowed his way from the Forum into the Vicus Tuscus on the eve of December 25th, A. D., 61.

The light streamed from the windows and doors of many shops over the uneven pavement. A crowd of boys were paying homage to a mock king, who, seated on a small hand-cart, arrayed in an old red garment, and crowned with a peaked cap, was holding court before the heavy portals of an ancient tenement. Two men approached the group and entered at the door.

"The boys are having a good time to-night," said one of the men as he paused for a moment on the threshold.

"Yes," replied the other with a sigh, "I wish they had a mind to celebrate this night becomingly. It is sixty-five years this evening since the shepherds heard the angels sing on the plains of Bethlehem."

"Would that it were so," returned the other; "but, by God's grace, your book, my Luke, will cause them to understand the story."

Yes, it is they, Timothy and Luke, who last were seen a few years before in Ephesus. They closed the door behind them and ascended the stair.

"I thought you would come this evening," said the great apostle of the Gentiles, as he raised his eyes from a roll of Isaiah which he had been reading.

They were the same eyes that had watched by the cradle of the Ephesian Church, sometimes seeming to see far away, sometimes shining with a brilliant light, always kind and tender. He was an older

man than when he embarked on the galley at Ephesus. But the pallor on his cheek, and the weariness of his movements, suggested not the passage of four short years, but the passage of years full of anxiety, pain and suffering; the passage of years age-bearing, because the lover of freedom had learned in prison, not without effort, to be content in whatsoever state he was. Beside him sat a muscular man in a military cloak. As Paul laid aside his roll, the clink of iron revealed the fetter on the apostle's wrist, attached by a short chain to the soldier's belt.

"I am sorry to have sad news for you."

"Sad news?" said Timothy, starting; "has the enemy gained any advantage in your case?"

"It is not my case," answered Paul, "but Ephras and Aristarchus have been arrested."

"Arrested? And for what, pray? Surely this must be some scheme of the prosecution, for it is not illegal to be a Christian."

"I am sorry to believe it is so," replied Paul. "I murmur not that my Lord saw fit to deliver me into the hands of my enemies at Jerusalem, nor that, after two years of bondage at Cæsarea, I was sent in chains to Rome, suffering shipwreck on the way. But, indeed, it fills my soul with grief that my faithful friends should suffer on my account."

"Can we do anything?" suggested Luke eagerly. "Let me go and see what can be done."

"I have sent Tychicus to our friend the centurion, Julius, to ask his aid. It seems they were arrested at the instigation of the High Priest,

Ishmael. As you know, he recently arrived in Rome at the head of an embassy, charged, among other matters, with my prosecution."

"They have made this move as a part of their scheme to entangle and ruin us all," cried Timothy, hotly.

"Speak not so, my son," answered Paul, gently. "Even the Psalmist knew that the wrath of man shall praise God. Shall not we, who know that God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, believe that with him he will also freely give us all things? Aristarchus and Epaphras are the called according to his purpose, and all things shall work together for their good."

"I know it, Father," answered Timothy, in a low voice. "I spoke rashly."

"Well, I will have to bid you fellows good-night," interrupted the soldier, as heavy steps were heard upon the stair. "By Bacchus, I wish I took things as easily as you do, old man," continued he, unlocking the chain from his belt. "Pluto take me, if contentment is not better than money."

"I am glad it is your turn on duty, Suilius," said Paul, as the new guard clasped the fetter to his waist. "You are one of them whom I have begotten in my bonds."

"Yes," answered the soldier, meekly; "it was by God's providence that I was assigned to you; for you have shown me the Christ."

"Have you heard of the arrest of our brethren, Aristarchus and Epaphras?" said Paul.

"Yes, before I left the prætorium, Tychicus was

there, looking for the centurion Julius, and he told me."

"You are acquainted with affairs. What is likely to be done?" asked the prisoner of his guard.

"That is hard to say. If they had no friends they might die of neglect in prison; but Julius is their friend, and the noble Burrus will aid them. I hope they may be delivered."

"Let us pray for them," said Paul.

The four men fell upon their knees. The light flickered upon its stand, casting gigantic shadows of the suppliants upon the wall. It revealed a room about twenty feet square, with low ceiling. On the one side, two windows looked out over the darkened city; on the other, three doors led into inner chambers. The floor was of plank, rough hewn and uneven. A table, divan, and several chairs, constituted the furniture of the apartment. Unpainted closets, nailed against the plastered wall, contained besides clothing and household utensils, many cases of rolls, the little library of the Church of Rome. The only article of adornment, if such it might be called, was a brazen cross fastened above the table. It was Paul's own hired lodging.

When the prayer had ceased and the men had taken their seats, Paul said: "My brethren, we must not be sad to-night of all nights. Even the heathen celebrate with joy the turning of the sun on its northern course, and shall not we rejoice on this anniversary of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness upon our world?"

"Tell us of the birth of Jesus, Father," urged the soldier. "I am so ignorant."

"Luke can tell you about that, or you can read it in his book," replied the apostle.

Luke then repeated the story of the babe of Bethlehem, the story which never grows old. When he had finished Paul remarked: "That was indeed the incarnation of God; for though he was in the form of God, not thinking to be on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, yet he emptied himself, and made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. That was the greatest night the world has ever seen. Because God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful men; to-night, in Syria, in Asia, in Greece and Italy, very many of the redeemed thank God for the grace that made Jesus poor that we might be made rich."

At that moment the door below was opened, and many feet were heard upon the threshold, while the sound of voices came to their ears.

"The Lord must have sent his angel and opened the prison door as he did for Peter!" exclaimed Paul, rising to greet his guests.

Time had laid its changing hand upon both Ephras and Tychicus. Four years had made a wondrous change in the son, by nature, of Theron; the son by adoption, of the Asiarch, Glaukos. The thoughtful youth had become, through the ministry of suffering and the cares of office, a mighty man of

God. Tychicus had also grown into a larger freedom than that which Epaphras had given him; for it was the freedom of Christ. Aristarchus was not perceptibly changed. He had been a vigorous man in the day when he endured the buffetings of the Ephesian mob, and the strength of manhood was with him still. With them entered a soldier of commanding presence and noble mien.

"Tell us why you were arrested, and how you obtained your freedom," continued the apostle.

"We owe our freedom to the noble Julius, answered Epaphras, turning toward the soldier. "If his kindness had not assisted us we would at this moment be lying in a dungeon."

"He is always so kind," interrupted Luke. "Neither Paul nor myself can ever forget his courtesy and assistance, throughout that long and perilous journey from Cæsarea to Rome."

"If you express so much gratitude," replied the officer, confused, "you will make me afraid to do you a good turn in future. I have only done my duty by worthy men."

"Sit down and listen to our story," said Epaphras, helping himself to a chair.

"Well, as you know, Ishmael, the High Priest, arrived in Rome recently at the head of an embassy to protest against the position of Agrippa's palace in Jerusalem, which overlooks the temple. He is also charged with the prosecution of Paul. Even now he is intriguing against you with bribes and appeals to the superstition of Poppæa. But his chief legal grounds are found in the old law against

the introduction of strange religions. That Paul may appear to be the leader of a numerous sect which holds this purpose, at his instigation, we were arrested this morning just as we concluded our preaching to the laborers on the Via Tiburtina. Tychicus, who had not spoken, was unmolested, and so he brought you word."

"Yes," answered Paul, "he appeared in my lodgings about noon, breathless and excited, hardly able to tell the news. I sent him to find the noble Julius. But what was done with you?"

"We were cast into prison unheard, and remained there until Julius came to let us out. He can tell how he succeeded in doing it better than we can."

"It was easily done," remarked the centurion modestly. "When Tychicus came to me, I had just returned from drill, and was about to go to the bath. I have not enjoyed that luxury as yet, you see," glancing down at his dusty tunic and stained boots. "I immediately sought an interview with Burrus, the Prætorian Prefect, who, as you know, thinks highly of Paul. Through his influence our friends were happily delivered from prison, but not from custody. I gave security that they would remain in this house, fellow prisoners with Paul, and under the care of his guard."

"Blessed be God!" exclaimed the apostle, "who always provides friends for us in time of need. The brethren might have died in prison but for your assistance."

"Indeed, we owe you our lives," said Epaphras softly.

"Do not say that. I have not delivered you as yet," answered Julius, "for ye are still prisoners. Undoubtedly your case will not be called until Paul's is disposed of. If he is acquitted, yours will never be mentioned; but if he is condemned, in the flush of victory the Jews will make it go hard with you."

"We are in God's hands," answered the apostle, and although I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless, to abide is more needful for you. I believe that we all shall be delivered from the mouth of the lion."

"You Christians are a peculiar people," replied the officer thoughtfully. "When I was in Cæsarea I knew an excellent centurion, named Cornelius, who was a Christian, and had been for years, converted by a vision or something of that sort, I believe. How he succeeded in being a Christian and soldier at once I cannot understand."

"It was by God's grace, my Julius; and that is sufficient for thee also," said Paul.

"Well, I almost wish I were a Christian," replied the other seriously. "However, I must go now. If I can be of any service to you, do not hesitate to call upon me. My friends Aristarchus and Ephras must not forget their parole"—this playfully. "I know all Christians are descendants of Aristides the Just, therefore my caution is unnecessary. Good-night."

"Well, Timothy," said the apostle, when the sound of his feet grew faint upon the pavement

without, "since Aristarchus and Epaphras are to be my fellow prisoners in Christ Jesus, some one must needs bring their possessions to my house. You, Luke and Tychicus can attend to that, however, in the morning. I trust your imprisonment may be short, my brethren," addressing his companions in bonds, "and that it may fall out rather to the furtherance of the gospel, as mine has done. For my bonds are manifest in the palace and in all other places."

"This is quite like the old times in Ephesus," said Luke, as he glanced around the company. "I wish Archippus, Nymphas, Glaukos and all the brethren with whom we wrought, in that happy time, were with us to-night."

"It is better that the salt of the earth be scattered over the world," answered Paul, "although I greatly desire to see them, and trust through their prayers to be given to them again. I suppose Nymphas and the Church of Laodicea will be sad indeed when they hear that their pastor is a prisoner at Rome."

"You can never imagine whom I saw to-day," said Tychicus, looking at Epaphras.

"Any one from home?" replied the latter.

"No one else than the former slave of Archippus, Onesimus."

"How strange! I knew he ran away about the time that Demetrius raised his uproar against Paul. Philemon tried to find him, for he had stolen from Apphia a large sum of money which was entrusted to him to pay for some of the articles needed for Menodora's wedding. But he never heard a word

from him, and we all supposed he was lost forever. Rome is the sink which sooner or later catches all dregs; and it is no wonder that he has drifted here. Where did you see him?"

"At the school of the gladiators, as I returned from my search for the centurion Julius."

"Alas, poor slave!" murmured Paul. "Has he come to that? How often I wondered at his obduracy against the gospel. When the faithful Manes died, and left so great impression upon all, I hoped he then would come to Christ. As the Master himself says, 'Some seed falls by the wayside where the birds come and devour it up.'"

"Did he know you?" asked Timothy.

"At first I could hardly believe my eyes, for he looked utterly broken and sick; but I went up to him as he sat in the sun, and called him by name. He seemed frightened at seeing me, but soon told me that his life in Rome had been one prolonged agony. Last summer he was sold as a slave for theft and purchased by a lanista, who was training him to let him out to shows. I asked him how he liked it, and he was dumb with despair. Afterward he muttered that he did not care now, as a banquet was to be given by Tigellinus to-morrow at which he was to fight, and he was determined to be killed."

"Poor fellow!" exclaimed Epaphras. "For Archippus' sake, and for the sake of old times, we ought to save him."

"Yes," answered Paul, "and for his own sake and for Christ's, Onesimus must be saved. He has many strong qualities, and, were he converted, he

would make a splendid Christian and a useful servant of the Lord. Can we not buy him?"

"How much money can we raise?" asked Timothy.

"I have nearly all of the two hundred denarii which you brought me from my friends in Asia, my Epaphras," said the apostle. I can give it all, as I know that Epaphroditus is on his way from the Church at Philippi with a present for me. We must save him by all means."

"I can spare one hundred denarii," said Aristarchus.

"And I five hundred," said Epaphras.

"Here is my last month's pay," remarked the gruff but kindly Suilius, as he fumbled at the belt to which Paul's chain was attached, for his wallet.

"We who are at liberty," exclaimed the excited Timothy, "will go to free him to-morrow, and will bear our share of the expense."

"Yes, it is well for us all to go who can," answered Luke, "for in the multitude of counselors there lacketh not safety. Timothy and Tychicus, you come with me to my lodging, and we will be up betimes and ready for our deed of love."

"We who remain shall make our chamber of imprisonment a little sanctuary," said the apostle, as he raised his manacled hand in a good-night blessing.

CHAPTER XXII

THE DARKNESS BEFORE THE DAWN

It is not a pleasant task to trace the genealogy of despair, and yet it may be useful. Despair is the death of the soul, and, as such, is caused by sin; for "sin when it is finished bringeth forth death."

Onesimus in his youth had mistaken the license to follow his own unrestrained inclination for the substance of true liberty. So long as he had never beheld true liberty he was excusable for his error. Through many months at Ephesus he observed men and women attaining a glorious liberty by the union of their wills with the divine. But he turned from the sight to seek his own liberty in pursuit of personal desire, and sinned; for the essence of sin is to choose something less than the best. So rejecting true freedom he had gone on seeking his own false idea of freedom until, as a slave, rented for gladiatorial exhibitions, he had sunk to the lowest bondage. And his soul, ever disappointed in his search, had sunk into the lethargy of despair.

He was not, therefore, a turbulent and troublesome slave like some of his companions. He ate and drank well as his master commanded, and went through the ceaseless drill of the gladiatorial school with a docility which was surprising. And yet when the contest with wooden swords waxed hot, Onesimus joined the fray with an energy and skill which

boded ill for his opponent when the wood should be exchanged for steel. It was the energy of despair which courts death, but that his master could not know. Indeed, that worthy man, discovering that Onesimus was a good fighter, had changed his original purpose. He had intended to put him in with a company of one hundred whom he had contracted to furnish for an exhibition of butchery. But now he reserved him for longer training, intending to rent him out for private entertainments.

Tigellinus had recently sent an order to furnish half a dozen gladiators to be matched against the same number of his own company. The exhibition was to be in private at his bath, and the contestants were to fight on a wager. A group of dissolute young nobles desired to know whether home-trained or school-trained gladiators possessed the more skill.

And now the sun had risen over the ancient Apennines. Nocturnal Rome had slunk away to its dens and caverns of crime and filth, as some unclean reptile glides into the earth to conceal itself from the light of day. Rome, the city of the Cæsars, the mistress of the world, was awake and astir. The slaves were cleaning up the debris of last night's debauch in many a marble palace of the aristocratic Carinæ; the Via Sacra resounded with the roar of traffic; the cheating shop-keepers of the Vicus Tuscus were opening their stalls; while the noisy Suburra was filled with companies of laborers going to their daily toil.

Onesimus looked out of his cell upon the world, a world which had been cruel to him, and which he

expected to leave that day. It was a narrow cell with a barred window; for the lanista took care that no member of his family should escape the sword of the arena.

"Yes, I am resolved upon it," he said to himself, as he munched the breakfast of bread and meat which a slave brought him. "I shall make a show of fight at first, and then yield myself to my opponent's sword. Ah! ah! this then is my last meal. I shall be free at last in the infernal world, unless"—gloomily—"Pluto's prison is a reality; or it is as the Christians say."

A cold sweat started out upon his brow at the thought. He was young, and life itself was sweet to him.

"Coward that I am!" he muttered, as the lanista opened his door and led him out into the court. The six gladiators were soon assembled. Stripped of all clothing and oiled from head to foot, they contended in practice for the last time.

"Move quick, there, Markus. By Bacchus, not so high a thrust, Gaius; you expose your breast too much when you raise your arm."

Onesimus showed unusual skill, and his master remarked, "Well done, Onesimus; you will come through the day with a whole skin, I will wager."

Then raising his voice he cried, "Hark ye, slaves, to every one who kills his opponent I will give a week's carouse with wine and women in this court. But Pluto take the one who fails, for I will save no whipped cur of mine."

While a guard bound the gladiators preparatory

for departure, the voice of the lanista was heard at the gate.

"No, I cannot sell him. I have engaged him to fight to-day, and I cannot put another in his place."

The voice of the questioner was heard again: "How much would you take to give up the fight and sell the slave?"

"Fool," replied the other, "do you not know it would ruin my reputation with Tigellinus, the rising favorite with Nero? By all the gods, a talent of gold would not buy him before the contest. But if he is alive to-morrow morning, you can have him for ten sestertia. He is worth that much with his training."

"I fear we cannot pay it," replied the other; "at least at present."

"Then stand aside and hinder me not. By Pluto, the sun is already an hour high; and the gladiators should rest a little after their march before they enter the arena."

"If he is wounded will you sell him?" called the other, as the lanista entered the court. A muttered curse was the only reply.

"We will await the result outside the baths," came the call, as the gate was closed.

Few apartments in Rome the luxurious could rival the banquet-hall at the bath of Tigellinus. The wall was one vast mirror of burnished silver, relieved from monotony by a procession of snowy nymphs who carried baskets of stony dainties in uplifted hands. From above cupids and psyches

reached down to grasp the fruit thus borne aloft. The floor of black, white and green stone cast back the light which fell in many hues from colored windows above. Soft curtains at either end concealed the doorways.

Tigellinus and his favorite mistress reclined upon a divan spread with a cloth of gold beside an ivory table. At other tables were his begarlanded guests and their lady friends. Barefoot slaves moved noiselessly about the hall.

Presently an ass, made of Corinthian brass, was drawn into the room. Over its back were suspended panniers containing white and black olives. Upon its saddle rested a silver charger filled with grapes and pomegranates.

"By Venus, my lord," remarked one lady to the host, "if Patronius were to see this fruit he would die of envy."

When this course was removed, four slaves, dancing to music, brought forward a large silver tray, upon which was a golden beehive. The diners applauded when this was lifted. A hare with wings, to represent Pegasus, occupied the center. Hens, ducks and peacocks were arranged around, while song-birds perched on sprigs of green were above them. Two kids and two goats, stationed at the corners, poured sauce over the whole.

The smile occasioned by the grotesque spectacle soon died away, and the guests ate with the languid air of those whose highest joy is of the table, and whose palate is always surfeited.

While the dinner was in progress slaves covered

the floor at the lower end of the chamber with fine white sand.

"Present your combat while we are at dessert," whispered his mistress into the host's ear. "The sight of blood will whet our appetites."

The master waved his hand in token that the entertainment was to begin.

And now the gladiators were drawn up on either side. They were entirely naked, unless a small shield worn on the left arm and a short sword could be called clothing. It was agreed that they should contend two by two, according to lot, and that the victors on one side should fight with the victors on the other in a general contest.

The first battle fell to Gaius and a negro gladiator belonging to Tigellinus. The two men entered the arena, and after bowing to the spectators began the combat. At first the negro stood his ground, and with lightning movements parried the thrusts of his antagonist. The beholders grew interested, and a volley of oaths and imprecations were launched at the gladiator because he failed to draw the negro into conflict. As they moved backward and forward across the sand, Tigellinus raised a cry of delight at the quality of their skill.

"Venus be praised!" cried one of the ladies, as the sword of Gaius, skillfully avoiding the extended shield, cut a long gash down the swarthy side of his opponent.

"I am not much interested until the blood begins to flow," languidly remarked the painted favorite of Tigellinus.

Just then the negro succeeded in laying open the left shoulder of the other, who, maddened with pain, sprang upon him with such force that his shield flew from his hand. There was a confused spectacle of bloody bodies and glittering swords. The negro lay upon the sand, while Gaius, faint from loss of blood stood over him and held the steel to his throat, looking toward Tigellinus.

"As she says," said the host, motioning with his hand toward the lady beside him. She with clasped hands cried, "Oh, prick his neck so the blood spurts high! You can tell the strength of a man by the distance it will spurt. I have noticed it often."

It was but a moment, and the attendants dragged the dying form of the negro from the chamber. The conqueror was assisted into the inner room to be patched up for the final conflict.

The turn of Onesimus came next, and of him his master had high hopes. If Gaius, one of the least skilled of his gladiators, was successful, certainly Onesimus should be. He knew not that the slave was determined on death. So it was with amazement, mingled with rage, that he saw him after a few feeble thrusts, fall upon the sand, bleeding from an ugly wound on his left thigh.

"Hold!" he cried, as the unharmed victor was about to put the sword to his victim's throat, "he is my property, and I do not want him killed. By Pluto, you must have bewitched him, for he was a skilled swordsman."

Amid a chorus of hisses Onesimus was borne and

dragged into the chamber where already the negro's body was stiffening with the rigor of death.

"A pretty piece of business this!" cried the lanista, with an oath, spurning the bleeding form of Onesimus with his foot. "You did not put up half a fight."

"Oh, let me die; Oh, let me die!" cried the agonized slave.

He had fully supposed that the moment when he felt the cold steel against his throat was his last. Now he realized that death had escaped him even as he sought it.

"You worthless knave!" roared his master, his wrath increasing as he gazed upon him, "were it not that some light-brained fools are willing to pay me for your cowardly carcass, I would kill you myself this minute."

Onesimus' only reply was a groan. The other's word seemed indistinct to his ear, and his angry face seemed to float far above him. He was fainting from loss of blood.

"Go out and see if those fellows are anywhere about," said the lanista to a slave. "By Hercules! if they are not in sight, I will take the coward home and roast him over a slow fire, as a warning to the other gladiators not to play the lamb when they fight on my wager."

"They are here, my lord," answered the trembling slave, as he ushered Luke, Timothy and Tychicus into the bloody chamber.

Luke had prepared himself for such an emergency, and in a moment he was on his knee beside

the prostrate form of Onesimus, stanching the flow of blood and binding with expert hands the ugly gash.

Timothy undertook to drive a bargain with the angry master.

"How much will you take for him now?"

"Ten sestertia, I said this morning, and for ten you can have him."

"It is too much. You said ten sestertia when he was sound and well, and now he is wounded and at the point of death. I will give you five."

"Five sestertia is as much as I paid for him, and, by Hercules, if he dies on my hands his carcass would not bring an as to feed the dogs. For five you can have him," he added, after a pause, as his eye caught the gleam of the money which Tychicus was drawing from his belt.

And so the sale was consummated, and Onesimus was once again among friends.

From a human standpoint, avarice prevailed over anger, and his life was saved. From the divine standpoint, mercy had blended with justice, and another opportunity was given him.

"I beg the pardon of my lords," said the lanista, as he entered the court where the guests awaited his return, "but some fellows desired to purchase the cowardly dog, and I got as much as I gave for him."

"Tychicus, run out and procure a covered litter as quickly as possible," said Luke, holding a flask to the lips of the reviving Onesimus. "We must take him at once to Paul's lodgings."

CHAPTER XXIII

FREEDOM AT LAST

The wound which Onesimus had received was severe but not fatal; and the loss of blood had rendered him very weak. As in a dream he felt himself lifted into the litter, as in a dream the noisy street glided past him. Still dreaming, he was borne into the lodging where Paul, the prisoner, with Epaphras and Aristarchus, his fellow captives, had arranged for his reception. Luke had sent a messenger ahead that they might be prepared.

And so it came to pass that when the ugly gash was dressed, and Onesimus had settled down in a soft bed, he slept—slept at first the feverish sleep of utter exhaustion. As the day drew to its close his breathing became more regular, and the watchful eye of Luke perceived that he was doing well. Several times during the night Onesimus awoke, to find himself in a small alcove chamber through the door of which he looked into a larger room. The flaring lamp revealed the bent head and kneeling form of the apostle, absorbed in prayer, unmindful of the sleeping soldier beside him. Several times as a wave of supplication swelled up from the suppliant's heart, Onesimus caught the words, "O God, grant that I may beget him in my bonds. Oh, my Master, bring Onesimus to thy feet." And Onesimus knew that he was praying for him.

The patient fully expected that with the new day he would be accused of being a fugitive from the household in Colosse. His confused and fainting mind had dimly perceived that he had been purchased by Luke from the lanista, but for what purpose he had hardly attempted to surmise. Perhaps it was because Luke, the physician, knew that he could heal him, and was able to buy him cheap. More likely that he had acted under orders from Philemon, to recapture his slave if ever the opportunity should arise. Onesimus had not entirely forgotten the strange kindness of the Ephesian Christians, but four years of poverty and brutality had obscured the memory in his mind.

He was surprised, therefore, when Tychicus brought him the best breakfast he had tasted for many a day, and, shoving back the curtain that the bright winter sun might stream in, cheerily asked him how he felt. Luke also came to dress his wound. Epaphras, Aristarchus and the others bade him good-morning. It was all so wonderful and so different from his usual greeting. And it seemed so much like home, to behold the familiar faces, that the vision swam in tears before his eyes. Each of them acted as if glad to see an old friend, but not one of them said a word in regard to his sins or his past life. When evening came Onesimus listened to the voice of prayer and praise in the other room. It sounded strangely sweet, and he fancied himself in the schoolroom of Tyrannus, with Archippus, Nymphas, and all the associates of his former life, while faithful Manes sat by his side. The vision

vanished, and Onesimus groaned and turned on his couch.

In a moment Luke was at the door, asking, "Brother Onesimus, is there anything you want?"

"No," replied Onesimus, in a choked voice. When had any one before called him brother? Not even the Christians in Ephesus had so designated him. Thus the time passed rapidly, and his wound was doing well.

One day was very like another in the lodgings of Paul, and yet there was no monotony. The members of the little company were continually coming or going. With them came and went many people whom Onesimus had never seen before, but whom he soon came to know by sight and name. There were Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, Justus and Demas. These were strangers of the East. Among the Romans were Epenetus, the well-beloved; Andronicus and Junia, whom Paul addressed as kinsmen; Amplias, the beloved in the Lord; and many more.

Onesimus breathed the atmosphere of their presence, and it seemed to him like the breath of heaven. He listened to their conversation, and could hardly realize that they belonged to the same race with the vile inhabitants of the Suburra, or the coarse members of the gladiator's school. It began to seem to him that life, for them at least, was worth living. It puzzled him. Why was he not addressed either concerning religion or about his old life? Was it true that they had forgotten who he was? But that was impossible, for he heard Paul speak fre-

quently of Philemon, Archippus, Nymphas, and the other brethren of the Asian coast.

One day a traveler arrived from Philippi—Epaphroditus, they called him. Onesimus had never seen him before; but Luke and Timothy greeted him as an old friend. He brought a present of money from the Philippian Church for the apostle, and a large budget of letters from the East.

When they had been read, Paul entered the chamber of the convalescent and said, "Onesimus, I have received word from home. Archippus has written to me about the state of the Church at Colosse. Philemon, Apphia, and all the saints are well. Nymphas and his wife, at Laodicea, have a little son; whom they have named after me. They are anxious that Epaphras should return to the pastorate of their Church, for they do not yet know that he is my fellow prisoner. I thought you would like to hear from them."

Onesimus was too confused to make an intelligible reply, but he stammered something concerning his joy at their health.

On another occasion he heard Tychicus talking to a group of slaves in the court. The street happened to be quiet, and their conversation was wafted upward to the window.

A voice said, "This Christ religion is good for freemen, but will it not be impossible for slaves like us to be Christians?"

"No," replied Tychicus, "I have known many Christians who were slaves. To be a Christian strikes the shackles from the heart, if not from the

wrists. Christ came, as he himself said, to preach deliverance to the captives. One of the best Christians I ever knew was an old slave, named Manes, at Ephesus. He was a true freedman of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. He died mysteriously shortly before I left the city, and he is now in glory."

Onesimus could listen no more. He bowed his head and wept great hot tears of shame and remorse. The bondage which he felt was the cankering fetter of sin on his soul. At last he knew that the worst slavery was of the heart, and not of the hand.

Just then the voice of Tychicus, unheard for a time, came again to his ear. "Christ said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'"

Onesimus buried his face in his hands and prayed—the first time for many a day—"O Christ, make me thy freedman."

Suilius was the most considerate of guards. His interpretation of the rules concerning his prisoner was always liberal. Therefore Paul had retired to his own chamber, while the officer was pacing backward and forward in the general room.

"Suilius," said Onesimus, in a faint voice, "do you know how wicked I am?"

The soldier paused, and looking kindly toward the weeping penitent, said, "How wicked you are! I know all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. I too had a very heavy burden on me once, but it is gone now. I am glad you see your sins, for that is the first step toward salvation."

"Oh! but do you know," cried Onesimus, grasping his tunic, "I am a thief, a liar, a murderer, and everything that is bad."

"Then you are just the man whom Jesus came to save," said the other, gently.

"But how is it," persisted Onesimus, "that Paul and all these good men can endure to have me in their company? They are spending their time and money on me, treating me like a king. I never did a good thing in my life, and I tried to poison Paul."

At this the slave burst into uncontrollable weeping and threw himself on his couch. The eyes of Suilius were grave and solemn, and he silently drew the curtain and departed. After some moments Paul entered, and sitting down by the bed, softly put his hand upon the heaving shoulder of Onesimus. We must be as delicate as that camp-hardened soldier, for he drew the curtain of that chamber, where Paul heard the confession of many sins. The two were kneeling together before the throne of the divine mercy.

It was several hours before the apostle reappeared with a quiet joy in his face. Onesimus was not seen again till the next day. When he did limp forth, however, leaning on his staff, Paul introduced him to Aristarchus and Epaphras in these words: "Brethren, this is Onesimus, Christ's freedman."

And so the mighty chain, the links of which were selfishness, pride, lust and ambition; the mighty chain which had been riveted to the soul of Onesimus through nearly thirty years of ever-tightening bondage, was broken. The fetters fell from off his

hands, and the lover of freedom walked at liberty, because he kept the divine precepts.

Onesimus was very happy. It seemed to him as if he loved the hard-hearted shop-keepers of the Vicus Tuscus; the half-clad beggar boys who clamored on the street; and even the masterless dogs which growled in the gutter. Most of all, he loved the company of the Christians, and was ready to listen for hours while Paul prayed or spoke. His wound was now nothing more than a great red scar, and his strength and appetite had returned. He seemed like a new man. But, if his body was improved, it was merely the external sign of an internal fact; for his heart was singing all the time.

Onesimus was very happy, but he was also very humble. As one, with his feet on a rock, just rescued from the quicksand, is very happy, although ashamed of the dirt on his person, and mindful of the slough whence he was delivered; so was Onesimus. He felt keenly the disgrace of his sins and the power of evil habit. He mourned for the murder of Manes more than before; and the kindness of Paul, who now knew that once he had attempted his life, quite overcame him. Only after some weeks did he stammeringly confess Christ in the assembly; and three months of careful instruction, and earnest, prayerful study passed before he could bring himself to enter the waters of baptism. Nor was this time wasted by any means; for when he sat down at the Lord's table he was able to express intelligently a reason for the hope which was in him.

The weeks that followed his baptism were the

happiest Onesimus had known in his whole life. To sit with the manacled Paul during the early hours of a spring morning, and drink in the word of truth, even as Mary, years before, had sat at the Master's feet in distant Palestine, was to him a delight and an inspiration for the day. To spend the middle hours of the day engaged in honorable toil with the brethren, that he might not be chargeable to any, was also his pleasure. The centurion, Julius, had obtained work for the little company in the making of tents for the Roman army. Onesimus, while his hands were busy on the coarse canvas, working for his support and for the common fund, found his mind and heart fully employed also. To walk the streets of the mighty capital arm in arm with Tychicus, a bearer of the gospel of freedom, was to complete a day of happiness.

The brethren watched the change in Onesimus, and were happy in his joy.

One day, when Timothy had returned from a preaching tour among the laborers of the fossæ, having left Onesimus there to teach a class of horny-handed sons of toil, he remarked to Paul, "Father, the power of Christ in that slave is wonderful. I never supposed he had such a gift to teach. At Ephesus he was morose and dogged, and so he was here at first. Now grace is in his heart, and words of grace are upon his tongue."

"I know it," replied the elder man joyfully. "Onesimus is his name—Profitable—and profitable is he to me for the gospel. When we were in Asia I recognized his superior qualities, but they were

dwarfed and suppressed, until he was converted. I thank God when I behold young men like yourself, my son Timothy, and Onesimus growing up to take the places of us who have labored in laying the foundations of Christ's building. 'Instead of the fathers shall be the children whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.' "

"God grant, O Father," said the youth, "that you and the other apostles may live to see the walls of the building far above the ground; or even to see the coming of the Lord himself. We would rather labor under your direction."

"My trial cannot now be long delayed," replied Paul, as if musing to himself; "and whether the issue be for life or for death, it is in God's hands. I have a presentiment, however, that it shall be for life, and that I shall again freely preach the gospel for which I am now an ambassador in bonds. But the outcome is doubtful, and I may never again see the churches which are in Asia. And since, if condemned, I may not have time nor opportunity to send them a last message, I have decided to send such letters at once. The word that came recently, while encouraging in many respects, still contained statements which made me anxious. Archippus wrote from Colosse that a Jewish Christian had come there, who was preaching another gospel, by which Christ is dishonored and men are brought into bondage to the letter. I fear the effect of such teaching, especially among the Colossians, for I know the Phrygian character is prone to fanaticism. I have therefore decided to write a letter to the

church at Colosse, and one to the Church at Ephesus and the surrounding towns. Tychicus, who is about to return to Asia bearing the news of Epaphras' imprisonment, can carry them."

"It is well, Father," replied Timothy; "shall I get you the writing materials?"

And so, when the disciples gathered for their usual evening conference, and to wish God-speed to Tychicus, who was to start the next day, Timothy excused the absence of Paul, saying, "He is very busy writing messages to the churches which are in Asia."

While Luke, Demas, Justus, Aristarchus, Mark, Epaphras and the others were engaged in conversation, the light in the inner chamber streamed over the silver locks of the great apostle, and upon the papyrus sheets before him; on which were written those words which the church has kept among her treasures ever since.

"I have finished," said he, as he re-entered the larger apartment; "but there is another matter which has been on my mind for some time, and of which I feel constrained to speak. Our brother Onesimus has never been legally freed from Philemon. And in the days of his ignorance, when he fled from his master's service, he took with him a large sum of money which has never been returned. Is it not our Christian duty to part with him, dear as he is to us; that he may return to his master and right an old wrong? What do you think of it, Onesimus?"

The eyes of the young man filled with tears and

he answered softly, "I knew what you were going to say, O Father, for at several times the matter has troubled me. To-day it has been especially upon my mind. I will return with Tychicus, into bondage, according to the flesh; but not, thank God, into bondage of the spirit; for Christ has freed me from that."

"Onesimus a slave again!" broke in Epaphras, when he comprehended the trend of the conversation. "None whom Christ makes free should be servants to men. So I thought when I gave Tychicus his liberty."

"I doubt not," answered Paul, "that his bondage will be short, for Philemon and Apphia are true Christians. But without their will, we should do nothing, that their kindness may not be of constraint, but voluntary. Onesimus has proved himself a freeman, in his obedience to duty, even though it makes him again a slave. I will go aside, however, and write a short letter to Philemon, which Onesimus may present when he arrives at the house of his master."

That night when the brethren had retired to rest, Onesimus, having hastily prepared the few articles necessary for his journey, sat upon the side of his couch. Evidently the old struggle was renewed in his soul, for although he now belonged to Christ, he was not yet beyond the region of battles. To return to his master, whom he had defrauded and wronged; perhaps to be a slave; could he do it? It was the crisis of his life. If he yielded to his feelings and refused, the enemy, issuing forth from this

fortress, would again overrun his whole soul. If he proved his freedom from the dominion of desire, by obedience to this command of Christ, the last hostile stronghold in his heart would have surrendered, and henceforth he would be free indeed. The conflict was severe for a time. He raised his eyes—shining with the light of victory.

“Yes, because I am Christ’s freedman, I can, if necessary, be Philemon’s slave.”

By his side was a traveling case, partly packed, but yet open. In it lay three letters, unsealed, all written by the hand of Paul, one to the Church of Ephesus, one to the Church of Colosse, and one to Philemon. Paul had told Onesimus he might read them if he wished. He now picked up the letter to the Colossians. Could we hold those priceless autograph manuscripts in our hands, as Onesimus did that night, the universities of Europe and America would mortgage all their endowments to buy the treasure, but we cannot. We can, however, look over the shoulder of the slave and read with him. He has nearly finished the letter to Colosse as we glance at it, so that we only read the closing sentences:

“All my affairs shall Tychicus make known unto you, the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord: whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our estate, and that he may comfort your hearts; together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things that are done here.

“Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (touching whom ye received command-

ments; if he come unto you, receive him), and Jesus which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision: these only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, men that have been a comfort unto me. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Jesus Christ, saluteth you, always striving for you in his prayers, that ye may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear him witness, that he hath much labor for you, and for them in Laodicea, and for them in Hieropolis. Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, salute you. Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church that is in their house. And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea. And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord that thou fulfill it.

“The salutation of me, Paul, with mine own hand. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.”

Onesimus laid down the letter to the home church, and began to read the letter to his old master, concerning himself. We have read the words before, but perhaps they have a clearer meaning, as we read them now:

“Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy, our brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow-worker, and to Apphia, our sister, and to Archippus, our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

“I thank my God always, making mention of thee in my prayers, hearing of thy love, and of the faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints; that the fellowship of thy faith may become effectual, in the knowledge of every good thing which is in you, unto Christ. For I had much joy and comfort in thy love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through thee, brother.

“Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting, yet for love's sake I rather

beseech, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus. I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus, who was aforetime unprofitable to thee, but is now profitable to thee and me: whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart: Whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel: but without thy mind I would do nothing; that thy goodness should not be of necessity, but of free will. For perhaps he was therefore parted from thee for a season, that thou shouldest have him forever; no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord. If then thou countest me a partner, receive him as myself. But if he hath wronged thee at all, or oweth thee aught, put that to my account: I, Paul, write it with mine own hand, I will repay it: that I say not unto thee how that thou owest to me even thine own self besides. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my heart in Christ. Having confidence in thine obedience I write unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even beyond what I say. But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I hope that through your prayers I shall be granted unto you.

“Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, saluteth thee; and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow-workers.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.”

CHAPTER XXIV

AT COLOSSE ONCE MORE

Theodoret says that the house of Philemon at Colosse was still standing in the fifth Christian century. A structure which could withstand the tooth of time for four centuries, would hardly be made perceptively older by the passage of nine short years. It was in the year A. D. 54 that we were first introduced to the household of Philemon, and now time's revolving circle has brought us to mid-summer of 63.

The same low whitened wall, unbroken by windows without, greeted the eye with a sense of dreary monotony as one ascended the steep street to the portal. Within, a decade of years, years momentous to the world and the kingdom of God, seemed to have made no change. There were the master's apartments on the left and the slaves' quarters on the right as of old. All was as before. Ah! no, there was a slight difference. Where the statues of Greek deities once stood, in the niches of the wall, were now pots of living plants; and where there was previously a small altar before the shrine of the household gods, was now a simple marble cross. Several slaves were in sight, cheerfully busy.

Within the court of the women's apartments, at the door of the chief chamber, sat a woman past middle life, clad in snowy white. By her side was a box of rolls, and from one of them she was read-

ing. That classic Greek face, once seen, could not be forgotten, for it was Apphia, wife of Philemon, and mistress of the house. Age had begun to plow its furrows down those beautiful cheeks, but it could not dim the light which shone through the soul's windows, revealing the illumination within. Ever and again she lifted her eyes from the roll to watch with fond interest the sport of a child, some five years of age, who was sailing a miniature ship upon the waters of the stone tank in the midst of the court.

"Oh, grandmother," cried he, his face turned toward Apphia, "the galley on which Paul was coming here upset, and he fell into the water."

"No, no, my foolish Paul," cried the lady playfully, "you are too late with your omens of ill. The galley on which he sailed is even now at Ephesus; and, ere sunset, I hope you may see the great man after whom you are named."

"Tell me about him, grandmother," said the boy, forgetting the catastrophe to the shipping in the tank, as he nestled in Apphia's arms. "Is he a great man like the giant we saw in the forum the other day? All the boys ran after him. He wore a red cap and black boots."

"No, dear, the apostle is not a large man in size, not so large as your father or uncle Archippus. We call him great because of what he has done in the name of Christ."

"Then is not uncle Archippus a great man also? for he preaches and baptizes people in Jesus' name. That is what you say the apostle does."

"Your uncle is a good man, Paul; and I trust he is great in the sight of the Lord; but Paul is greater than he."

"Tell me about him?" urged the child.

"Soon after the Lord Jesus rose from the dead and went to heaven, there was a great persecution against his disciples."

"Persecution, what is that?"

"A persecution," answered Apphia, feeling for words to make her meaning simple, "is a time when bad people arrest, put in prison, and sometimes kill, good people, because they worship the true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent."

"I know," cried Paul, "I heard father and grandfather talking about the persecution at Pergamos."

"Yes, that was a persecution, and a sad one for the Church," answered Apphia, "the time that Antipas sealed his testimony with his blood. Well, many years ago, when your father was a little boy like you, and your mother was not yet born, Paul persecuted the Christians. He went to the city of Damascus to arrest them and to bring them bound to Jerusalem to be punished. On the way the Lord Jesus met him shining with a light brighter than the sun. When Paul had fallen from his horse, he said, 'Paul, Paul, why persecutest thou me?' He then told him that he must be a Christian, and preach the gospel to the ends of the earth."

"And did he do it?" asked Paul deeply interested.

"He is doing it now, my child, and it was through him that your father and mother, your grandfather and myself were all converted. God gives the

apostle power to work miracles at times, and so Paul raised your uncle up from his death-bed, and restored him to us."

Just at that moment there came a cry of joy from the roof, "Oh, mother, I see him! I see him! Nymphas has crossed the bridge on his white horse! He said he would ride ahead to let us know they were nearly here."

Before the words were uttered, Menodora appeared at the foot of the stair. She had been a beautiful girl, she was now a beautiful woman.

"Run, tell your grandfather, child," exclaimed Apphia, dropping Paul from her lap, "he is at his devotions in his own chamber."

Soon after the stamping of hoofs without announced the arrival of a horseman, and Nymphas entered, tall and noble, such a man as a sculptor might choose for his model of a god.

"I joined them," said he in response to his wife's question, "as they passed through Laodicea. There were four of them, Paul, Epaphras, Timothy and Luke. They will be here directly," kissing his wife and swinging the delighted Paul upon his shoulder. "I left Archippus, Onesimus and Tychicus to escort them, while I hastened on to inform you. Is everything prepared?"

"We are all ready," replied the house-wifely Menodora. "Supper is waiting on the roof this beautiful summer evening. Did the apostle look as he used to? Only think, dear, we have not seen him since the night we were married seven years ago."

"The same light is in his eyes, and the same glorious expression on his face, as of old; but he has aged a good deal and is somewhat broken. Luke informed me that the two years of enforced idleness at Cæsarea told on him severely. And his shipwreck on the way to Rome was a hard experience. The three years at Rome were not easy. You must remember that he has just passed through the anxieties of a tedious trial."

"Through whose aid was he acquitted?" asked Apphia.

"Through God's aid," answered Nymphas, reverently. "But the secondary reason was the whim of the emperor. The Jews failed entirely to establish their case, but they confidently relied on intrigue with Poppæa, Nero's mistress. He is greatly influenced by her. That day Nero was in a pet and asked whether they supposed that a band of priests and a woman controlled his opinions. So Paul escaped."

"He must have made a quick journey," said Menodora.

"Yes, he came into Macedonia by way of Apollonia and the Via Egnatia to Philippi. The brethren there would have detained him, but he hastened on to Ephesus, and so is here at last."

"I am glad our home is to entertain such a guest," said Apphia, "and I hope he will remain long with us, and rest from his labors and trials."

"To-night," said Menodora, in a businesslike way, "he is to be our private guest, and to-morrow Archippus desires to confer with him concerning

the welfare of our church. After that I suppose he will not have a moment to himself."

"How like old times it will be," mused Nymphas, "for all of us to sit down together as in our student days."

"Better than old times," whispered Menodora softly, laying her hand on her husband's shoulder, "for then I did not have you, dear."

"Yes," answered he kindly, "better for us and for all the world, for Christ's kingdom has grown much since then. Onesimus and many others are our brethren now who were not so at that time."

"Was Onesimus glad to see Paul?" broke in Apphia.

"Glad to see him? I should say so. He is more grateful than any other man I ever saw. All the way, as we rode to meet him, he kept repeating that, under Christ, he owed him his liberty."

"Onesimus was never intended by nature to be a slave," replied Apphia. "But I am glad that when he returned to his old bondage, and we rewarded him by giving him his liberty, he had already found freedom in Christ."

Nymphas answered: "If he had not obtained it, I do not think that Paul could ever have persuaded him to return the many miles from Rome to Colosse to be a slave again. I never heard of one enduring a greater test than that. Naturally one so soundly converted has become one of the most useful members of the church. Archippus tells me that he never supposed that he had the making of such a man in him. He is eloquent in speech, fervent in

spirit, and mighty in the Scriptures. Above all, he is filled with the Holy Ghost and qualified for every good work. But here they come," as the sound of many feet, of the bustling slaves and stamping horses was heard without.

It was a delightful evening in midsummer and the full moon shone down on the white-spread table placed upon the roof of the house of Philemon. Seldom during the first century was there gathered together a more representative company of Christians than reclined at that banquet. Under a shimmer of golden light lay the flat roofs and narrow dark streets of the ancient town. Far away the great mountain walls stood dimly visible, the boundary of the world of sight. Very far away seemed the tinkle of evening bells, the cry of children at play, and the echo of feet upon the pavement below. The great gaudy world of sin and misery, so full of discord and the cry of war, seemed but a memory. Even as the chosen three found it good to be upon the mount of transfiguration with the Lord, so did these find it good to shut out the great world in which they lived but to which they did not belong. It was a world in whose corruption they were as salt, in whose darkness they were as light; a world destined to destroy them, but which they would conquer in their death.

Philemon, grown gray, but still hearty, occupied the place of host. By his side sat Apphia, for Christianity had brought husband and wife together at the Lord's table, and so at the home banquet. Archippus gave with the responsibilities of the



VIEW OF CHONAS, ANCIENT COLOSSE

pastorate of the church of Colosse, was on the other side of his father. Next to him were Menodora and Nymphas. Epaphras, bishop of Laodicea, was beside him, for he and Nymphas were bound together by the close ties of interest in the same church. Luke, the beloved physician, sat next, and Timothy, the evangelist. Tychicus, the freedman, sat opposite his former master. And Onesimus, no longer dogged and sullen, but with a face which true freedom had absolutely transfigured, sat next to him. Not now was it Onesimus the unprofitable, but Onesimus the profitable for the gospel. At the end of the table reclined that man who more truly than any other, except his Master, belongs to no one age or country, for all claim him, Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his mercy hath called us from the east and from the west to sit together again," said the apostle as he took his seat. This banquet is a type of the great feast in our Father's house above."

"Yea, Father," replied his host, "I hear to-night the voice of the Master calling to you who are worn in his service, 'Come thou into a desert place and rest awhile.' I see in this period of calm, after years of persecution, and before renewed labor, a type of the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Happy am I that the call to you comes through me."

"To-morrow, O Father," said Archippus, "I wish to consult with you concerning the welfare of the

Colossian Church, and in the evening I have invited the elders to meet with you. But to-night is devoted to the refreshment of your body after the toils of the long journey, and for the heart converse of those long sundered."

"Your kindness is truly Christian, my son," replied Paul. "I am weary with the journey and I wish to know of our friends of other days, our brethren in Christ Jesus. We heard at Ephesus of the death of the beloved Asiarch, Glaukos, but had not time to hear the particulars."

Archippus answered, "Glaukos was the same in life and death, ever modest and unassuming, every faithful and willing. Day by day his hands were full of deeds of kindness to the brethren, the one not knowing what the other did. And so, one day last year, he heard the story of an oppressed slave, through his servant Philo. It was a cold stormy day and he was indisposed. Ordering his litter he braved the storm to purchase the freedom of the oppressed. That night he was taken with a fever and the next day he sank rapidly. Too hoarse to speak he submitted quietly to all the efforts of his weeping servants. As Philo bent his ear to catch his whisper, he said, 'My doubts are gone, heaven is opening,' and he was not, for God had translated him. The whole Church was profoundly sorrowful. But he being dead yet speaketh. When his will was read, after some personal bequests, of which I sent word to Epaphras as his heir, he left his whole great property for the care of orphan children, of whom there are so many in Ephesus. No such will

was ever signed in Ephesus before, and it made a great talk among the heathen."

"I understand," remarked Philemon, "that the priests of Diana were driven by public opinion to devote a portion of their treasure for the same purpose, a thing which had never been thought of until that time."

Epaphras brushed away a tear as he said, "It shall be one of the greatest purposes of my life to develop this charity which my good father, by adoption, left under my care. To his memory and for Christ's glory the funds shall be used."

"So by life and death Christ is glorified," replied Paul, "and I therein rejoice."

"I have often wondered concerning the sophist Tyrannus," said Luke. "How near he was to the kingdom of heaven! With what interest he saw others enter it! And yet he passed not in himself. Can any one tell how he now fares?"

"Alas, my old teacher!" replied Archippus, "I know by experience that it must be philosophy or Christ. They cannot be together. Christ said 'Whosoever humbleth not himself as a little child he shall in no case enter therein.' Since Tyrannus would not humble himself he must needs remain without. After the Christians ceased to meet in his school he became irregular in attendance upon the assembly of the saints, and at last he came not at all. He who once, in his search for the highest good, nearly found it in Christ, is now an absolute Epicurean, to whom baths, women and wine are the end of all life."

"How much his case is like that of my poor father after the flesh," sighed Epaphras. "He too has heard the gospel and with tears has been implored to accept it, but he hardens his heart. To-day he is an old man, upon the verge of eternity, but he still resists. Although I am so near him, I would be driven with curses from his door if I sought to approach him as a son."

"Christ said," rejoined Paul, "'I came to set a man against his father', and 'he that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.' This has been a severe trial to you, more severe on account of your loving disposition. Nobly have you borne it. Yours is the reward of those who forsake father and mother for his sake."

"While you are speaking of those who reject Christ I wish to tell how it fares with those who persecute him," remarked Onesimus. "When I was in Ephesus, on my return to my master from Rome, I desired to learn something of Alexander the Jew, and Demetrius the silversmith."

At the mention of that name a shudder passed over Menodora, but she bent her head to listen.

"You have all heard how in the days of my bondage to sin they made me twice a slave. Naturally I was curious to learn something of my old foes. I confess to a feeling of fear when I found myself in the same city with them."

"Tell us of them," spoke several of the guests at once.

"The shop of Demetrius was closed and to let, but I passed the abode of Alexander in the evening

and saw it brilliantly lighted. From the Christians of Ephesus I learned that the business of the image-maker continued to decline until he was unable to meet his obligations. Alexander was his principal creditor and he seized all his property, leaving Demetrius penniless. He wandered about for a time, but one morning his body was found floating in the harbor basin. Whether he was drowned by accident, or whether he committed suicide, will never be known. Alexander, however, has prospered as the wicked sometimes prosper for a season. He was angered by the disgrace of his daughter when she fell into open sin. But when he found that it was profitable, for the damsel was very fair, he was somewhat pacified. To-day the brethren tell me he is the most bitter of all the enemies of the saints in Ephesus."

Paul answered, "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil, the Lord will reward him according to his works."

The conversation was interrupted at this point by a golden-haired child, who, coming up the stair, walked unabashed to the divan on which the apostle reclined. He gravely said, "Are you the great Paul after whom I am named?"

Menodora sprang up blushing and would have led her child away, but Paul replied, as he lifted him to his shoulder, "Yes, my boy. God grant that as you are named from me you may be one of those to take the burden up when I have laid it down."

The infant Paul was content upon his new throne. The apostle continued, "Brethren, it is the influ-

ence of the babe of Bethlehem which gives freedom and joy to such a child as this."

"Not to children only but to us their mothers," replied Menodora, still standing with proud, happy eyes before the divan of the two Pauls.

"Not only to women and children but to us men as well," remarked the noble Nymphas.

"And most of all to such as I," said Onesimus slowly and with evident emotion. "I, who was once Onesimus the slave, first of Philemon, and then in a lower bondage to my own passions, am now the freedman of Jesus Christ."

Paul's answer still rings through the ages, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

THE END

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